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PROTOCULTURE ADDICTS

23

MAY - JUNE 1993

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- KIMAGURE ORANGE ROAD
- SILENT MOEBIUS: THE COMIC
- MANGA IN JAPAN

THE ANIME & MANGA MAGAZINE

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EDITORIAL

THE HERO INSIDE

You are
What you do
When it counts

We've all faced that problem. This wiseguy, who doesn't know the first thing about animation, asks you anime buff why you flip over giant robots and girls with large eyes, claiming that it's not as realistic as North American animation or comic books. You freeze in mid-motion. Your glasses crack and shatter. Your jaw hits the floor with a muffled thud. You are left speechless. The answer is too obvious to put into words.

Most North Americans have this thing about big eyes. It's fairly funny when you consider that the man who made large eyes popular in Japan, Osamu Tezuka, borrowed this concept from an American he greatly admired: Walt Disney. Similarly, ever since *The Little Mermaid* came out, large eyes have made a strong comeback in the English-based animation field. To convince yourself of this, simply have a look at *Fern Gully: The Last Rainforest, Aladdin* and *Beauty and the Beast*. While the eyes may not be as large as the Japanese's, they are certainly larger than realism would or should allow. They are used to emphasize emotiveness and enhance the expressions of a character.

However, the strongest prejudice against Japanese animation is the constant presence of giant robots. Most North Americans see them as nothing but a slightly cooler version of the Transformers or of the Gobots. What is always entertaining is that the same people who shoot down the concept of giant robots are the first ones who go out of their way to buy superhero comics.

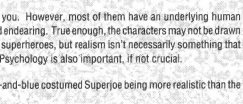
When you get right down to it, there's not much difference between a superhero and a giant robot pilot: both are people with some type of superpower. In the case of the superhero, it is something he carries with him at all times. He wakes up with his superpowers and goes to bed still a superguy. During daytime, when he's at work, whenever anything requiring his intervention occurs, he has a supertrick handy which he can use to solve the solution. Pretty soon, he becomes more of a walking set of powers than a person.

What about our giant robot (mecha) pilot? When he wakes up in the morning, he's just an ordinary guy who rubs his eyes and reaches for his coffee. He goes to work, suits up, shoots a few aliens and comes back home to the wife and kids. He's a normal man (or woman) with no real power of his (or her) own. He has to deal with everyday life as an everyday man would. His mecha can't help him except when a space invasion occurs. Between him and the superjock, he's the one who has to find human solutions to human problems. He can't zap his way out of a mugging. He'll have to talk and negotiate. He can't fly away at the first sign of trouble he can't handle. He'll have to find the courage to stay and solve the problem. In short, he has to stay human all the time, because he has no choice.

Not all Japanese animations are good, mind you. However, most of them have an underlying human quality that many among us find appealing and endearing. True enough, the characters may not be drawn with as much detail as some North American superheroes, but realism isn't necessarily something that is measured by proportions and pencilling. Psychology is also important, if not crucial.

So let's not hear anything more about this red-and-blue costumed Superjoe being more realistic than the large-... eyed (!) Dirty Pair.

Tune in in 60 days!



Jean Carrières

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Alexandre Racine 4, 7, 39
Adam Warren 5
Don Yee 40

Other illustrations from:

AD Police: 12-14; **Akira** 1: 88; **Animetopia** Laminates; **Area 88** 1: 157; **Cyber Comix** 04: 84; **Dragon Ball**; **Jump Gold Selection Dragon Ball Z Anime Special II**, 99; **Kamui** 2, 5; **Lone Wolf & Cub**; **Lycéenne**: Cover; **Macross Illustration Book**: 10; **Maison Ikkoku** 5: 15; **NEWTYPE** 4-1993: 94; **Patlabor** 2: 3; **Silent Mobius** Side 1: 4, Side 3: 261; **Ranma 1/2** 1: 94; **Venus Wars** 3: 53

All other illustrations came from promotional artwork or directly from the animation.

FLASH NEWS

SO! WHAT'S NEW?

ROBOTECH SCOOP

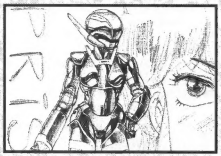
ROBOTECH is back! It is not just a rumor, it has been confirmed by Jack McKinney: ROBOTECH will start again in September '93 on SCI-FI Channel! Harmony Gold also gave a license for a new line of toys available in November (producer is still unknown). All this seems to be the result of Del Rey's efforts. They will publish again the ROBOTECH novels in an "Omnibus" collection, each volume compiling three novels, starting in May 1994 and an entirely new novel (untitled yet) will be released in August '94. Another will follow in Spring 1995. This new novel series will cover the "lost year" of ROBOTECH, from the destruction of the SDF-1 to the launch of the SDF-3, which more or less includes the "Malcontents Uprisings". If there is still some groups of ROBOTECH fans out there, let us know about you. There is still a lot to be done for ROBOTECH... Tell us what you want to read in those novels. (Jack McKinney fans should also take note that volume 4 of the BLACK HOLE TRAVEL AGENCY novel series will be released in December '93).

MACROSS II CD

U.S. Renditions will produce another soundtrack CD. After the success of their ROBOTECH CD (which sold out very quickly) and their AKIRA CD, they will release soon a MACROSS II compact disc containing five song and fourteen BGM.

BUBBLEGUM CRISIS

The BUBBLEGUM CRISIS comics will be released at the end of the year by Dark Horse. Adam Warren will do the writing and penciling. The inker & colorist has not been announced yet. It will have 32 COLOR pages and will retail for $2.50 US / $3.15 CAN.



I CAN HEAR THE OCEAN

Studio Ghibli, Miyazaki's studio, produced an animated TV series based on the novel I CAN HEAR THE OCEAN by Saeko Himuro, previously serialized in ANIMAGE in 1990-91. Character design and art direction is done by Katsuya Kondo. It is directed by Tomomi Mochizuki. It premiered last spring.

MACROSS II

MACROSS II has been released in a 120-minute theatrical version. It made its debut in Florida at the end of March and toured through Maryland, Ohio and California in April. It is distributed by Tara Releasing.

LYCÉENNE

Controversial Japanese manga artist U-JIN (pseudonym!) has released a collection of his (or her) art. The ANGEL series provoked a "moral uproar" leading to a self-labeling movement in the Japanese manga industry. This hardback, entitled "Lycéenne", is available at NIKAKU ANIMART.

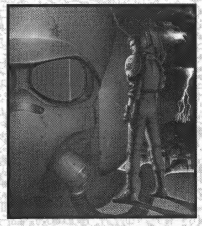
ANIME NEWS

AD POLICE

AnimEigo, the leading releaser of subtitled Japanese Animation in the USA, announced final release dates and pricing for its upcoming series of AD POLICE FILES videotapes. "The AD POLICE FILES are set in the same universe as our hot-selling DUBBLEGUM CRISIS series," said AnimEigo V.P. Roe R. Adams III. "However, they are a much darker look at the problems that might be caused by technology advancing faster than humans can adapt to it." The 3 AD POLICE FILES are set in Mega Tokyo in the year 2027. Technology has created artifically-intelligent androids, called "Boomers"; like any invention, they can be used for good and for evil. To deal with an upsurge in Boomer crimes, the ADvanced Police is formed.

AD POLICE FILE 1: PHANTOM WOMAN.

Megapolis Tokyo has begun to adjust to the general use of the Boomers as worker androids, but incidents involving those Boomers running amuck start happening in rapid succession. Rookie Leon and his partner Geena determine that these incidents are the work of a defective Boomer who is illegally reactivating Boomers that had been disposed of, but not before one of the reactivated Boomers, a female model, escapes, carrying with her the memory of the man who destroyed her — Leon McNichol! Color, stereo, 1990, 40mins., $34.95. It will be released August 26th, 1993.

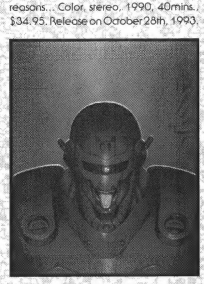


AD POLICE FILE 2: THE RIPPER.

"Normal Police" Detective Aills Kara investigates a string of baffling prostitute murders, in which the victims have had their abdomens slashed open. The bloody trail causes her to look into the current trend of biomechanical replacement; the upgrading of human beings by replacing their frail biological components with more powerful devices. Eventually, she runs into a most unusual woman, one who has had some very unusual upgrades for some surprising reasons... Color, stereo, 1990, 40mins., $34.95. Release on October 28th, 1993.

AD POLICE FILE 3: THE MAN WHO BITES HIS TONGUE.

AD Police officer Billy Fanwald, critically wounded in battle by a runaway Boomer, is used as an experimental subject for a cyber-operation. Reborn as an invincible Cyborg Policeman, Billy seems to be the easy solution to Boomer crimes. But for Billy, who can only confirm his humanity by biting his tongue, loneliness and sadness can penetrate even the thickest of armor. Is Billy man or machine? Is he both, or neither ? Color, stereo, 1990, 40mins., $34.95. Release on December 30th, 1993.



VIDEO COMPANIES

In past issues of PROTOCULTURE ADDICTS, we gave you a products listing of the major distributors of dubbed or subtitled anime video in North America, but we neglected to give you their addresses. Here they are:

A.D. VISION. 2709 Chimney Rock, Houston, TX 77056, USA.

ANIMEIGO. P.O. Box 989, Wilmington, NC 28402-0989, USA. Ph: (919) 251-1850.

CENTRAL PARK MEDIA/US MANGA CORPS. 250 West 57th St., #831, New York, NY 10107, USA. Ph: (212) 977-7456.

STREAMLINE PICTURES. P.O. Box 691418, West Hollywood, CA 90060, USA. Ph: (310) 657-5985.

US RENDITIONS. 1123 Dominguez St., Suite K, Carson, CA 90746, USA.

ANIME 18

Leading Japanese animation suppliers US Manga Corps and Anime 18 (ANIME 18 is Central Park Media's adult label) are pleased to announce the release of two brilliantly animated action adventures. LEGEND OF THE OVERFIEND, also known as THE WANDERING KID, has already enjoyed success during its national theatrical rollout. Based on a popular comic book series, AREA 88 Act I is an action-packed wartime story with highly realistic aerial combat sequences. Both will be released on August 11th. (Pre-order date: 7-21-93).

A masterpiece of the "erotic grotesque" segment of Japanese animation, LEGEND OF THE OVERFIEND singlehandedly created the genre of ultra-violent and inhumanly sexual animation. According to legend, the world consists of three dimensions — the Human World, the World of Man-Beasts and the World of Monster Demons. Every 3,000 years, the Overfiend is brought to life to unite these three dimensions into a new world of peace and happiness. Amano from the Man-Beast World has been on the trail of the Overfiend for over 300 years, but now he realizes that the new world that the Overfiend is supposed to create may be sickening beyond human comprehension. Cat.#A18 1072, Color, Stereo, 108 min., dubbed, rated NC-17, $39.95.

SILENT MÖBIUS

The occult sci-fi superhit series continues in July! Kia Asamiya's exciting sci-fi police series Silent Möbius captivated fans across North America when it was released in 1991 with its mysterious futuristic setting, its unique mystic lots, and most of all by its cast of beautiful and gifted psychic characters. In July, VIZ will release part four of Silent Möbius and continue the advntures of the women of the Abnormal Mystery Police Department.

The world of Silent Möbius is dark and murky. The acid rain that constantly falls over Tokyo in the twenty-first century is not the only hazard of living in post-industrial urban setting. The city is often besieged by strange otherworldly beasts and villains who ravage the lives of their unsuspecting victims. Amidst the chaos are six exceptional women who possess highly developed psychic power and extrasensory abilities to fight the evil entities that threaten their world. Katsumi, Nami, Kiddy, Yuki and Lebia are five extraordinary young women led by the enigmatic Chief Rally Cheyenne who united them to heighten their abilities and to unite their powers to defeat evil.

In part four, Katsumi's boyfriend Roy is transfered to a new police division where he embarks upon an investigation into the mysterious transformation of ordinary people into homicidal monsters! One day, in the course of a vicious fight, Roy save a little girl. A month later, his best friend begins transforming into a horrifying monster! Look like a job for the Abnormal Mystery Police. Part four is a five-issue series starting in July and will finally reveal the long-awaited secret of AMP Chief Rally Cheyenne!

Summer of '93 will be remembered by fans as the summer of Silent Möbius. The release of Part Four coincides with the special appearance of Michitaka Kikuchi at this year's Anime Expo in Oakland, CA in July. Kikuchi is the general director of the two Silent Möbius animated films and long-time collaborator of Silent Möbius creator Kia Asamiya. The world of Silent Möbius and an exclusive interview with creator Kia Asamiya is also featured in the June issue of Animerica. (Viz Comics).

IANUS NEWS

SUBSCRIPTION

Despite what we said in earlier issues, we must raise the subscription fee for both magazines. The difficult economy of this time increases our production costs, so we have no choice. Besides, the cover prices have been raised twice without any raise of the subscription rate. It was too good a deal. There is even a reader who wrote us to say he was ashamed to pay so little for his subscription. It will now cost the subscriber about the same as if he/she was buying the magazine in a store, with the difference that he/she will be guaranteed to receive it automatically, without trouble. Starting mid-June, a PROTOCULTURE ADDICTS subscription will be $24 US/CAN and a MECHA PRESS subscription will be $36 US/CAN.

However, we are offering a special price if you subscribe to both magazines at the same time. This combo subscription is $50 US/CAN instead of $60 if you subscribe to both magazine independently. It will be like subscribing to a single magazine, receiving an issue each month, alternating between MECHA PRESS and PROTOCULTURE ADDICTS. It will give subscribers a greater variety of subjects and deeper coverage.

YES! YES! AND YES.

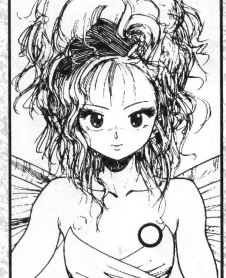
We're not forgetting our readers: the buttons of the MECHA PRESS/ PROTOCULTURE ADDICTS ANIME TOUR 93 will be available directly through IANUS PUBLICATIONS. There are six different buttons (3 for PA and 3 for MP), and each individual button will retail for US$3.00. The complete set will retail for US$12.00.

PIXY JUNKET

A unique adventure in the tradition of APPLESEED! In a faraway world, a legend tells that kissing a pixy queen leads to great fortune and power. One day UFOs are spotted over a mountain range: the police surround the area with tanks and other weapons.

The adventure begins when two young men travelling through the mountains suddenly spot a strange pod from which emerges... a pixy! Soon everyone is after the pixy - governments, secret agents, even the royal family! This is the start of a brand new sci-fi adventure series from VIZ, packed with non-stop action, adventure, and a great ending.

PIXY JUNKET was created by one of Japan's rising young manga talents, simply known as "Pure". The story was originally published in Japan as "JUNKET by Seishinsha, publisher of great titles such as APPLESEED, DOMINION and ORION.



SPOTLIGHT

WHIMSICAL SECRET DOSSIERS

by Alain Dubreuil and Patrick Lapointe

Last issue, we outlined KIMAGURE ORANGE ROAD (KOR) in general. This issue, you will find the synopsises for episodes 13 through 24, as well as the critical "Secret Dossiers": little bits and pieces of interests which are specific and — we think — crucial to KOR.

Katsu-Sand

It is but a few moments before the lunch bell rings. Eyes are turned to the clock. Feet are shuffling nervously under the desks. Beads of sweat appear on anxious foreheads. War is about to be declared. The agony. The struggle. The defeat and the elusive katsu-sand.

This apparently innocent cutlet sandwich is the initiator of constant furious battles. It is a struggle for life, happiness (liberty?)... It is the only true test. EVERYONE in school dreams of the pure heavenly moments provided by eating a katsu-sand. The provider of this delectable dish wields enormous power over the hysterical crowds. In fact she relishes in it.

The katsu-sand war carries climactic consequences, dragging innocents away from their misguided purposes (talking to desired girlfriends) into the illuminated way of the conflict. Emotionally speaking, the katsu-sand is an intriguing tool: it is a powerful seductive enhancer, the only offering when begging forgiveness, the true mark of a hero (by capturing MORE than one katsu-sand), and the only worthwhile gift to prove one's true feeling for a loved one. Worthy of mention is the Veteran status acquired by Hotta. If medals of valor would exist.... The katsu-sand war, the conflict of the sandwich.

Umao-san and Ushiko-san

These two are the ideal, romantico-passionate (and idiotic) couple. A parody of Romeo and Juliet, they are external entities to KIMAGURE ORANGE ROAD, phasing in this reality to demanstrate the many facets of true love.

They appear in most of the series episodes, under various guises. Look out, they are after your hearts!

UMAO-USHIKO EPISODE GUIDE

Episode

1	At home, Umao leaving for work.
4	In full biker gear in a restaurant.
5	In the park.
9	On a park bench, about to kiss.
10	In Hikaru's dream of her being sick and waited upon by Kyosuke.
11	Riding a bicycle, overtaken by Kyosuke.
13	In the park, watched by all the students on garbage duty.
14	At the gym, Ushiko hugs "firmly" Umao.
15	Again at the Green Castle.
16	In old-style diving gear in the pool.
17	At the public pool, swimming.
20	At the tennis camp.
22	Exiting a room at the "lovers retreat".
23	Parking! (Don't worry, it gets weirder)
24	Swinging on the ropes in the park.
25	At the disco (they can't dance for...).
26	On a transforming bicycle.
27	Girl gang style.
30	Working at a fast food restaurant.
31	At the falls, performing a "ritual" jump.
32	They too can time travel.
33	Dressed like simple farmers.
37	Dressed for and playing Noh theater.
38	The star and the bell, in the giant Christmas tree.
39	At the market on New Year.
40	The spoof is spoofed.
41	The pair at the skating rink.
42	Wanna-Be Wrestlers!
44	Jumping out of a shop display.
45	Digging out into Kyosuke's tunnel.
48	Full circle: six years ago, on the staircase.

WHIMSICAL EPISODE GUIDE

by Alain Dubreuil

EPISODE 13

Catching Attention!! Hikaru's Big Transformation!

It's volunteers day and the students are on cleaning duty. Enters Super-Deformed-Sexy Hikaru, made up and dressed like a babe (Sorry). She's the target of every male in sight. Nobody recognizes her until she closes in on her prey: Tilt! Since the volunteers' merit is measured by the amount of garbage collected, Hikaru gets "love garbage". Though Kyosuke comments on Hikaru's look, he disappears to sit by the lake where he's joined by Madoka. She teases him about Hikaru's new appearance: she must have changed for someone.

Father has given Kyosuke concert tickets. Major traumatic pressure: whom to invite? Meanwhile, the Dumb Duo hopelessly lectures Yuhsaku about the birds and the bees. Kyosuke ends up going with Hikaru. She gets an outfit for the concert at Madoka's, catching an eyeful: "Madoka sexy?!" At home, the twins play "Hikaru transformation", leading to Jingoro's victimization! As Hikaru leaves for the concert, Yuhsaku becomes her bodyguard... NOT! Lurking around the concert site, Yuhsaku witnesses Hikaru waiting for HIM! He sees Kyosuke meeting sexy Hikaru, and jumps to his lecture's conclusion.

Kyosuke remarks to Hikaru: "I'm thirsty Ayukawa!". She flees in tears. Yuhsaku sees her and confronts Kyosuke with his duties: "So you think you have enough earning power?". Hikaru returns and sides with Kyosuke, causing further commotion until Madoka arrives. Everyone leaves to AbCb. Hikaru rationalizes that the habit doesn't make the person. Madoka and Kyosuke later walk home together: she mentions that nobody ever told her she's cute. Kyosuke replies "You look cute with that penguin."

EPISODE 14

Premonition Dream!! Kyosuke and Madoka Break Up!

Loosely based on the Tanabata legend: the story of a separated prince and princess, then reunited (represented by the conjunction of two astral bodies). A perfect occasion to make a wish.

Kyosuke dreams that Madoka breaks up with him. He awakens: he slept upside down. Later, Kyosuke surprises his sisters at a gym. There Madoka also trains. Hikaru is there as her trainer, cheering her on. Hikaru notices Kyosuke and lands in his arms, while Madoka hits the mat for the first time! Kyosuke is approached by Madoka's sensei, shoving him to a clumsy fall. This provokes Madoka and Hikaru's immediate responses. Kyosuke feels pretty wimpy. At school, Madoka and Kyosuke chat: maybe Tanabata won't happen — as rain clouds gather.

Secretly, Kyosuke embarks on a training rampage (Mr. Atlas!!!). He spies upon Yuhsaku to try and learn karate, but the latter gently catches him in the act. He trains Kyosuke, and Hikaru nurses him like a darling poodle. Madoka witnesses the scene with a smile until Kyosuke sees her and turns away, determined to impress her. Later at AbCb, Master gives Madoka clever insight about boys and girls. During this time, Kyosuke is squashed by Yuhsaku's sensei: off to the infirmary where Madoka runs to join him. Hikaru has left his bedside temporarily. They are alone: he mutters semi-consciously that he's not a wimp! She bends over him with tenderness to kiss him and suddenly his eyes open. They promptly assume an innocent posture to conceal from returning Hikaru what is clearly now a secret love affair.

As Kurumi's "powered" wrestling career is ended by her father, everyone rejoices at AbCb, celebrating Tanabata. Kyosuke slips off and ponders his dream on the balcony. Madoka joins him to put her wish on the wishing tree. She reaches high and Kyosuke wants to see her wish. She asks Kyosuke not to look, besides, she likes him the way he is. Well, so much for upside down dreams.

EPISODE 15

Madoka's Decision!! End of Triangle Relation!!

Chaos! Kurumi and Manami fight over territory: clothes! They ask Kyosuke to settle the conflict. He can't.

At school, Hikaru approaches Kyosuke: she wants to help decorate his father's photo

exposition. Kyosuke, lost in thoughts, abruptly agrees to a sad Hikaru. She wonders: another woman? She confides in Madoka... who shouts "NO!". She tells her to stick to Kyosuke, it'll be fine. Hikaru saunters off, while Madoka thinks: she remembers that she's the lucky one. A four-leaf clover was given up before, and now a boyfriend... for Hikaru. From then on, Madoka ignores Kyosuke.

Later at AbCb, Hikaru reminds Madoka she had agreed she'd help. She lies: Master needs her for a party. Kyosuke feels something is wrong as he's presented a glass of ICE water. The whole gang is now at the gallery decorating the exposition, Hatta and Komatsu doing their best drooling. Kyosuke is absent-minded, paying no attention to Hikaru. At day's end, the group goes to a restaurant while Kyosuke closes the gallery: Hikaru confronts him. She says that he's been acting weird and asks if there's another girl?! Kyosuke, under a picture of Madoka, replies "No, of course not". This relieves Hikaru who then reveals Madoka's advice. Click!

At AbCb, Master covers Madoka's lie with party favorites. At the restaurant, Kyosuke breaks! He leaves the table for the bathroom, but runs outside. Dashing to AbCb, he's surprised to see that a party actually occurred: Madoka has left. Finding a phone, he calls, always getting the answering machine. Ayukawa is alone with her sax, flashing back to the happy moments she shared with Kyosuke. She finally comes home, ignoring the phone. As Kyosuke is finally about to abandon, Madoka answers like her machine. Not letting him place a word, she says "It's OK. I get you," and waves from her window.

At the exposition, Kyosuke welcomes Hikaru and Madoka, while his reconciled sisters, pondering on the girls' pictures, ask him: "Which is best?". They should know better.

EPISODE 16
Believe it or not, Madoka saw a UFO!

It's semester's end, Madoka and Kyosuke are walking home after seeing a flick on aliens. Suddenly, they stop: there! A UFO! After a moment of stunned silence, Kyosuke pulls out a camera, but it is too late. Kyosuke runs home, hoping he photographed "something". then realizes who the real aliens are: sisters! Inspired by a film ("Close Encounters of the Third Kind"), they decided to make their own UFO. Kyosuke realizes that Madoka must not speak of their sighting. Later they agree to keep it a secret. Enters big-mouthed HIKARU.

The school goes haywire, Komatsu and Hatta leading the investigation! Kasuga denies the sighting, Madoka tells the truth. People believe Kyosuke over Madoka. "Why this lie?" people think, isolating her further. Kyosuke tries to explain himself to her, but to no avail. Hikaru interrupts a conversation between Yuhsaku and Madoka: who should I believe? As she argues with Yuhsaku, Madoka leaves. Hikaru and Yuhsaku set off to prove that UFOs exist... for Madoka's sake!

At the Kasugas, father and son battle. Kyosuke wants to tell the truth — to regain Madoka. His father beats him: NO! Madoka goes back to her "Pick" ways, visiting the disco, but refusing a cigarette — Kyosuke is in his room with her red hat — and she finally runs off the next day to ride with biker friends. Kyosuke, desperate, is after her. A melodramatic bike chase occurs. Kyosuke burns rubber and passes a motor bike. Madoka still ignores him as he catches up. He crashes, stumbles and falls... to be rescued by an angel. She forgives him because he came after her. She felt so alone, believing in a hallucination, but was it???

EPISODE 17
Summer's Temptation. Double Date out of the Blue!

Ah! Summer! Madoka calls Kyosuke to propose studying at the library. Hikaru calls to propose the pool. He says yes. To both.

He goes to the pool first and is quite impressed by Hikaru's bikini and bodyguard. Yuhsaku! The twins are also there with the hormonal sharks: Hatta and Komatsu. Kyosuke, though fixed on a certain anatomical part, suddenly realizes that he's late for a date: Ayukawa. He teleports to the library. They agree to a certain amount of work, and she hints at something later. On a larger scale, his mammal fixation is enhanced. After all, "I am male.. and..."

He starts teleporting back and forth between the pool and the library. He succumbs to a Hikaru breast attack, teleporting back wetly to the library. His power is low: he's falling asleep. Madoka, noticing his lack of effort, picks up her things and leaves. He teleports one last time to the pool, where the bunch has agreed to go to the fireworks tonight. She tells Kyosuke Madoka won't be coming, she was also invited to the pool, but told she was engaged elsewhere for the whole day. Kyosuke finally adds up "two and two". He turns Hikaru down. On the other side, Madoka goes to AbCb, telling Master she does not need her day off after all. He can go home to his family. She'll mind AbCb. The place is empty.

Kyosuke blitzes through the homework. He

wants to go and get Madoka, but it's too late, the festival is over. He ends up at the now-closed AbCb where Madoka and him enjoy their own little private fireworks. A rare and special moment of quiet intimacy.

EPISODE 18
Madoka s Challenge!! Big Monday!

Kyosuke, Madoka, Hikaru and Yuhsaku get to an island to enjoy beach activities. AbCb customers gave their tickets to Master. It's Sunday and the place is deserted. They learn about the Legendary Big Monday, a huge tidal wave that hits each year: it will be tomorrow. So much about freebies! There is also this story about a female ghost, Koto, roaming the beach in search of her dead lover. A lone female surfer is there, waiting for the wave. Everything points out to her being the ghost (scar, name, Yuhsaku s conviction).

Kyosuke and Madoka walk at night on the beach. She's scared by bats, holds him right and eventually faints when Koto appears. An injured Koto (she stepped on a piece of glass) finally explains to Kyosuke that her boyfriend has drowned on this beach three years ago. She has to challenge the wave to restore his memory. She asks Kyosuke about his girl-friend, pointing Madoka: "You have a long way to go. Be sure to protect her". He ends up carrying Madoka on his back until she regain consciousness!

Ayukawa decides that she'll challenge the wave since Koto cannot rely on her injured foot. Madoka tells to her worried friends that Koto's boyfriend will protect her. She handles the wave nicely, but suddenly loses her bal-ance and disappears. Hikaru is stopped in her rescue effort by Yuhsaku. Kyosuke uses his power to get her back on the surfboard, taking care of his most precious woman. She believes Koto's boyfriend saved her. Wrong guy!

EPISODE 19
Two's Experience. The Forbidden Island.

Summer at the beach! Our foursome is enjoy-ing youth. The sun cannot compete. Yuhsaku — the healthy type — proposes a fitful boat race to the island. Madoka wins the lottery and chooses her partner: Kyosuke. The two boats set off. Hikaru, disappointed, tries to whip Yuhsaku. Kyosuke will not be beaten by a kid! Power on! The two boats lose sight of each other. Madoka and Kyosuke make it to the island. He falls asleep. She ties the boat.

At home, the twins convince their father that they should be at the beach! They hint at what Kyosuke could be doing. Shadows talk! An impromptu trip is organized. The twits' hor-mones activate and manage to squeeze in. Drool-Click-Drool.

Kyosuke wakes up and searches for Madoka. He finds her bathing in a lagoon. He drifts into dreamland, where Madoka turns into a lovely mermaid! His reverie is broken by Madoka's rebuke: peeping Tom! They chat on the beach, and Madoka wonders if Hikaru's all right. Kyosuke reassures her: she's with the jerk. He imitates Yuhsaku. She laughs and threatens to tell. He goes on... The games of innocence begin. The pair lets loose, playing like teen-ager, building a sand castle, enjoying their time alone.

Near a cliff side, Hikaru urges Yuhsaku on: "We're almost there!". He's tired (a first!), but manages to pass the cliff side. They're back to where they started. Back on the island, the sun is setting, the castle starts to crumble. It's time to go back. No boat. It drifted away. At the hotel, family and friends worry about the missing couple, except Komatsu: get the picture? Hikaru does. Yuhsaku avenges her with a well-placed blow. The lech is silenced and Hikaru's happier. On the island, Kyosuke and Madoka look for a way to get back: Kyosuke is low on power. He cannot teleport. Madoka climbs a cliff to see if she can spot something. Kyosuke tells her not to and climbs after her. She falls. He catches her. Falling together towards a rock, Kyosuke cradles Madoka's head in his shoulder and reaches for any power at all. He miraculously manages to destroy the rock. They're safe.

Night has fallen. They have set a small fire. The tide rolls in. The castle loses its shape. Madoka blames herself, and then asks Kyosuke if he remembers when they closed AbCb together the first time (episode 5). She asks him to forget about what she said. Kyosuke is shocked, but she tells him that it was the first time she ever said that. She would like to keep what they have special. Astonished and happy, Kyosuke cannot reply. "What do you expect, I used to be bad!?!?." The fire dims a bit. Kyosuke takes out an apple from the bag. He takes a bite and realizes it's the last one. He offers it to Madoka: she bites where he just bit. Indirect kiss. She returns the apple. They stare at each other. A spark breaks out from the fire, sending Madoka — surprised — into Kyosuke's arms. Kissing Zone. The castle disappears under a wave. The gap between their lips narrows. Stealth chopper: Hikaru! The mo-ment is gone.

SPOTLIGHT

EPISODE 20

Witness Hikaru!! Summer is lots of Danger

Off to tennis camp! Everybody is aboard. The Dumb Duo show how they will finally score: candy! Sorrily, their bars break at the appearance of Kitaka-san, the dashing tennis coach. Every girl is after him. Almost.

Everybody tries out against Kitaka-san to be divided in groups: C- beginners, where most lands; B- average, alone-again Yuhsaku; A- advanced, with of course Madoka and... Kurumi's power-improved Kyosuke! Kitaka-san is amazed. Hikaru despairs. The groups split, but Kyosuke — challenged by Kitaka-san — practices alone in the woods. Ayukawa gives him a few close pointers. Hikaru surprises them and both try to justify each other. Hikaru, spurned, sulks. Next day, Kyosuke and Madoka practice together. He cheats using power so he can at least keep up. Hikaru, who was watching, leaves. Madoka notices and wonders aloud.

Hikaru stands by a lake. She's rushed into a boat by an attention-escaping Kitaka-san. He makes a pass at her. She screams and falls off the row boat. She's drowning! Kyosuke arrives on the scene and leaps to her rescue. On the ground, she runs away from Kyosuke. Kitaka-san, no longer desperate, trips him in his pursuit.

That evening, Hikaru leaves Madoka behind. She stops by Kyosuke's cabin. He's feverish. He talks in his sleep: "Watch out Hikaru!". She melts, kisses him. Kitaka-san arrives at Hikaru's cabin. Madoka tells him she's gone. He makes a pass at Madoka. She returns it. Good smash! Hikaru giddily returns, saluting Kitaka-san who makes another pass. Hikaru runs off as she witnesses Madoka's work. Madoka suggests to Hikaru that they chat and drink the night away. Reconciliation.

EPISODE 21

Kyosuke in Trouble! Sweet Whisper of Storm Hill.

Kyosuke and friends are forced to watch seniors play. He manages to slip away. By the lake he plays skipping stone. "Eight!" says Kumiko Oda, a clone of Madoka! "Seven" says Kyosuke. Her hat is blown onto the lake. Kyosuke tries to retrieve it, but she stops him. She asks if he's single and if he's interested in any girl. Without thinking, he answers negatively. Kumiko takes his arm and they walk off. Madoka witnesses the scene. So do the Twirs. She shuts them up. Hikaru arrives, wondering "Where is darling?"

Clouds gather. Kumiko and Kyosuke are running. She falls. He falls on top of her. She says it's OK. The rain starts. Kyosuke hesitates: "Are those raindrops or tears on her face?" They run for shelter. Hikaru at the cabin wants to run and find her darling poodle Kyosuke. Madoka stops her cold. It would only cause problems. In the shelter, Kumiko and Kyosuke are in their underwear. Kumiko offers herself again. He refuses. She cries "Am I not beautiful enough?" Kyosuke is desperate for an answer: "We're too young!" Madoka is pensive, with her sax. The rain stops. The search for Kyosuke begins. Madoka leads the other away and finds the shelter. Anger and hatred. She leaves. Kyosuke carches her: Slaps cubed. Kumiko runs after her, explains everything. She's dying. He seemed like a nice guy. All is forgiven. Nothing is told to the others. Later, Madoka and Kyosuke receive a card: Kumiko survived the operation. Summer is over.

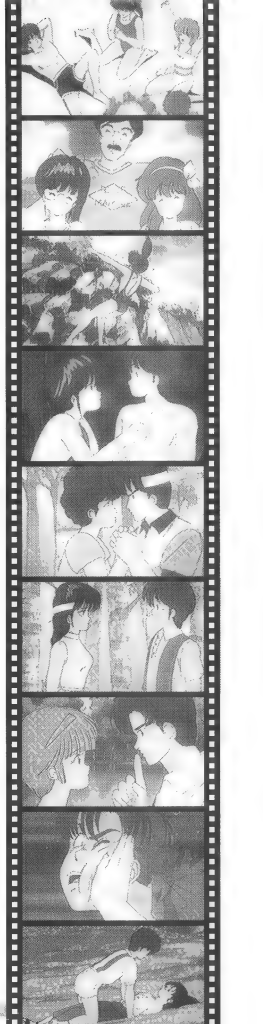
EPISODE 22

Adult Relationship? Madoka' Secret Morning Return.

Kyosuke goes to AbCb. Madoka isn't behind the counter. Yukari is. As Kyosuke tries to find out where she is, Yukari teases Kyosuke about Madoka's absence. She heard Madoka found a man. He leaves. "So that's Kasuga-kun."

Later, Kyosuke tries to pump Hikaru for information. She mentions a secret. Yuhsaku saves her forcefully before she tells. Kyosuke wonders why everybody seems to know but him. He surprises Madoka returning from an all-niter with a mysterious man named Shu-chan. He's angry.

Kyosuke muses on a swing. Yukari taps him on the shoulder. They go to the movies and see a film about an older woman and a young man. He dreams that maybe Ayukawa wants a more mature relationship, somebody older, as he replaces the actors on the screen by Yukari and him. Hikaru catches them later on a street corner: "You did not tell me you had an older sister!?!" Yukari plays along. Hikaru tells him to follow her to Madoka. He refuses rudely. Yukari mentions she knows of a great place. They arrive at a lovers' hideaway. Yukari corners him on a door and leans to kiss him. The door opens: Kyosuke sees Madoka on stage, playing guitar. Shu-chan introduces a new number written by Madoka and performed by his girl Yukari (good lyrics!). During the performance, Yukari unravels a ribbon around Madoka and tosses the other end to Kyosuke. At AbCb, Madoka explains that Shu-chan's her cousin. Kyosuke sees him and Yukari arguing. Madoka tells him not to worry: they're adults.



"It does not matter, adult or kid relation. What matters is to treasure the steps built one by one."

EPISODE 23

Kyosuke and Madoka's Big Fight! Three-Legged Race of Love!

Back to school! New clothes. New lingerie. Kyosuke's hormones. Old Yuhsaku. Some things never change.

The school's annual marathon is on: Kyosuke (by the Dumb Duo), and Madoka (in absentia) are volunteered to be the class' anchors/ representatives. Kyosuke announces the great news to Madoka who couldn't care less: why should she run? Kyosuke wants to make her do it: he daydreams that he forces her to do it. He screams in his daydream causing Madoka's fury. Angry at each other, Kyosuke sets on showing up Madoka by winning. He scouts the course with Hatta and Komatsu: to no avail. He finds a public toilet where he thinks he could teleport to shorten the distance. Hikaru surprises him: this is the lady's bathroom. He claims he's training because he's running for someone. She assumes it's her. She then helps him with his training.

Madoka tries to apologize after seeing him train so hard. In the park, she happens upon him, but he calls her Hikaru as, resting on a bench from training, he tries to think of a new place to teleport while Hikaru was getting sodas. Surprised, he gets up and — shoved by Madoka — falls in a cold fountain. Kasuga catches a cold. At school, Ayukawa learns that he's sick. She feels miserable. She goes to see him. Kyosuke opens the front door with power thinking it's one of his sisters. When he realizes it's Ayukawa, he tries to stop her, then he lets her in. Both try to apologize to each other and, finally, he asks her to race with him because that's what he wants. That's all Ayukawa wanted to hear. Beautiful end race.

EPISODE 24

Kazuya introduced! Watch out for the panic kid!"

Kyosuke, on his way home, bounces in an SD version of himself: It's Kazuya, his five year old cousin - master troublemaker. Father asks if someone could take care of him for the day. Lucky Kyosuke! Kyosuke bumps into a big guy. He apologizes but thinks otherwise. As if mirroring his thoughts, Kazuya insults him. Flee!

They end up at AbCb where Madoka is introduced to this cute(?) version of Kyosuke.

Kazuya has an instant crush on Madoka, presses her bust, commenting on its size, mirroring again Kyosuke's thought. Kyosuke, shocked, runs off with the brat in his hands. No chance, the kid glued Ayukawa's in his other hand. She calls Master to get the day off. Kyosuke thinks about her underwear: pink says Kazuya as he flips the skirt up with telekinesis. Nice brat! Kyosuke wonders if he does not have telepathy.

The three go to the park. Kazuya climbs up a jungle gym, calling to Ayukawa. She tries to climb, but he pushes her down. Kyosuke barely catches her fall: at a proper level. Kyosuke comments to himself on how good it felt, which Kazuya broadcasts aloud. Later, Kyosuke tries to read her mind, but Kazuya steps in: I have telepathy. Problem!

Hikaru happens upon the trio: "Darling you have a son!". Kyosuke has to rapidly diffuse a panic crisis. Kazuya then asks Hikaru if she's Kyosuke's girlfriend. Hikaru says yes, but Kyosuke jumps in saying no, convincing Hikaru that for a young child it would be improper.

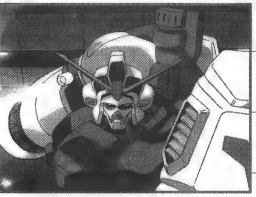
Kazuya decides to do Kyosuke a favor: he tells Hikaru that Kyosuke loves Madoka. Kyosuke has to muster all his believability to repair the situation, turning Madoka off. Kazuya is confused, and then takes Madoka away and tells her something. Hikaru mentions to Kyosuke that she's an only child, and has nobody. Kyosuke replies "You have me!?!" Kazuya and Madoka return and Kyosuke notices that Kazuya may have done the worst.

As the foursome goes to the train station, Kazuya manages to separate Hikaru and him from the couple. Not a word is exchanged, until a pervert tries to move on Madoka. Kyosuke steps in and protects her: "I won't let anyone touch Ayukawa!" Madoka warms up, wishing aloud that the both of them could just go somewhere alone. He holds her close. Next station, our destination: Hikaru. The moment is broken.

They walk home together. Suddenly Kazuya breaks away, turns around and says: "Onie-chan, is it really okay like this?" The question is addressed to all, as Kazuya realizes the triangle-game they play to maintain loves and friendships.

Madoka at home turns to her saxophone melancholy, while Kyosuke brings home an asleep Kazuya and thinks: "It cannot go on like this!"

To be continued!



GUNDAM 0083 0080

by Patrick Lapointe

Since our sister publication MECHA PRESS has been giving you all this GUNDAM, it's high time we give it a listen. Already the GUNDAM Formula 91 Soundtrack has been reviewed (see PA21), now it's 0080 and 0083's turns.

MS GUNDAM 0083: Stardust Memory

- Stardust Memory Soundtrack (1991)
- Magic CD single (1991)
- Evergreen CD single (1991)

Victor label, Victor Musical Industries

Not having seen the animation yet, one can tell something about the whole animation through its sound. There is not only a feeling of *déjà* heard, but a very North American feel to the music. I asked a simple question to the staff, and the response was "Yes": it is TOP GUN, served GUNDAM style.

The sound of the whole recording is different from what we had heard previously (COUNTERATTACK and F91), and some of the pieces have a very western flavor. Just the soundtrack has two songs in English. It's not bad music at all: it places itself right in-between F91 and 0080 in terms of style.

The opening track is very strong and belongs in the number one spot. Track 3 is reminiscent of STAR TREK, James Horner style, in its presentation. Tracks 5 and 10 are probably the best ones of this recording: a nice space feeling, a cold emotion, almost alien. Moody and well done. Tracks 6, 9, 11, 13 (very nice) and 15 are what we could call GUNDAM music: action, huge, big, things are happening. Track 15 is the weakest of the lot, because there is a good progression which barely culminates and then falls back upon itself. Track 14 takes an eternity to start and does not get anywhere.

The best vocal number on the soundtrack is MAGIC. It's a nice ballad which, although not very original, works! The other two, Back to Paradise and Winner (track 2 and 12) are exactly the same tune except for a few minor changes: instruments, rhythm and lyrics (words and language used). We would recommend you pick up the original: Kenny Loggins' Danger Zone for... TOP GUN.

The soundtrack itself is more for fans, though tracks 5 and 10 really reach the listener. On a sad note, this soundtrack has the most abrupt endings ever, revealing a certain lack of

polish. Overall not bad, but not great. In fact, we prefer the Evergreen CD single for its accompanying piece Men of Destiny. That's very good pop. Of these three selections, we would definitely skip the Magic CD single, get the other single, and maybe the soundtrack but it's not a recommendation. This music probably needs its visual package more than the other soundtracks reviewed.

MS GUNDAM 0080: War in the Pocket
• Sound Sketch One (1989)
Star Child label, King Record Co. Ltd.

Not our lucky day! This is another soundtrack that seems in need of its parent animation (one of our favorites too). The sound is a lot more personal than all the other GUNDAM soundtracks, and that fits the story of WAR IN THE POCKET: its human character is undeniable, yet something is missing. The emotions are not there, and even some of the arrangements, unlike everything we heard before, is a bit weak. Some of the tunes have a two or three second pause and then another musical piece is inserted in the track. The problem with that is the transition: it does not work.

Now, the saving graces: tracks 2 and 6 are very nice pieces that make up for the nondescript ones in this offering. Track 2 is mysterious with a certain grandeur, and manages a beautiful progression that moves well with just percussions and keyboards. All this in less than 90 seconds. Track 6 is again a beautiful choice of instruments: only strings and, in this case, violins and cellos. Combined, they play a sad romantic theme with still that GUNDAM attribute. Track 4 is not quite up there, but it is worthy of mention. Its beat keeps track of time and then "Boom!" but not quite: the sound is not there, but the rhythm is. As for the rest, track 1 is a nice popish song, not quite for kids and yet definitely not for teenagers, the voice is not quite right for it. Track 3 is an offbeat collage that waltzes all over the place. Of note is the military march which possesses a very child-like tone. Track 5 is unoriginal while track 9 signifies the return of the strings. Sorrily, its too little as the track moves off to a synthesizer reprise of the theme. Track 12 is a perfect example on how NOT to arrange a piece. Track 15 and 16 are seriously reminiscent of ROBOT CARNIVAL and WINDARIA respectively. Finally, track 17 is a cute storytelling tune, but it lacks a very important element: emotion!

In fact, it is the whole problem of this soundtrack: the lack of emotion. There are some nice touches reminiscent of Jean-Michel Jarre (synthesizer work) and, in fact, the composer does a lot with very little, mainly his synthesizer. Nonetheless, the efforts in developing themes did not produce results. The magic is missing for this soundtrack, and unless you're a fan or purchase albums for a few jewels in a sea of sand, skip Sound Sketch 1. Sigh! Can't win every time!?!

JUMP COMICS

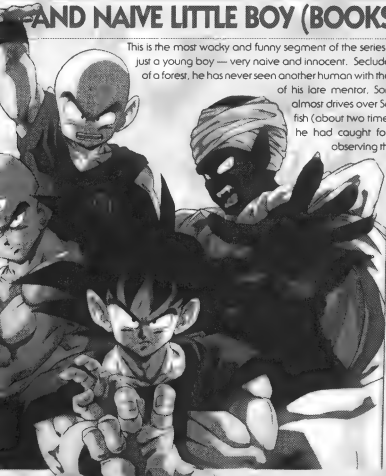
DRAGON BALL
ドラゴンボール 鳥山 明

DRAGON BALL OVERVIEW

by Daichi Saeki

Akira Toriyama's *Dragon Ball* is currently Japan's most popular manga. Started in 1985 in Shonen-Shukan-Jump, it started off very much like his preceding work, *Dr. Slump*, and was a "Gyagu" manga (a slapstick "gag" manga). They are the adventures of the monkey-like boy ("Songoku" IS a name from Chinese mythological tales...) and his search for seven Dragon Balls which will grant him one wish. During these adventures he meets new friends and discovers a seemingly endless source of strength within himself. But between #28-#32, the story acquired dark undertones, with the emergence of a seemingly unbeatable enemy — the genetically enhanced Serú — who threatened the fate of the entire world. Only recently, #33 has marked *Dragon Ball*'s return to its original, hilarious, wacky roots which had been absent since #19 or so... In this article we shall try to sum up the *Dragon Ball* manga that are already in publication (up to December 31, 1992).

PART I: SONGOKU AS THE STRONG AND NAIVE LITTLE BOY (BOOKS 1-11)



This is the most wacky and funny segment of the series. Songoku is still just a young boy — very naive and innocent. Secluded in the depths of a forest, he has never seen another human with the sole exception of his lare mentor, Songohan. A girl almost drives over Songoku and the fish (about two times his size) which he had caught for dinner. After observing the damage that the boy causes to her car, she persuades him to serve as her protector (although her intentions are not clear) on her journey to recover the Dragon Balls. She explains to him that the Dragon Balls are crystal-like balls with stars embedded in them. Scattered across the globe, all seven balls, when united,

summon a dragon (the Shen-ron) who will grant any wish. The girl's name is Bulma and she is an electronics whiz. She invented a Dragon Ball radar to facilitate the search...

And so their adventures begin, in search of the Dragon Balls. We soon meet new friends such as the Kame-senin (Turtle master), Yamucha with his Ro-ga-fu-fu-ken! and a shape-changing pig named Oolong. Kame and Oolong are two characters who seem to share the same dirty minds. Songoku is soon taken under the wing of the great Mutenroshisama (AKA the perverted Kame-san), joined by another boy, Kuririn, who comes to train with him. They provide refuge to a girl on the run, named Lunch who has a split personality. One side of her is as innocent as an angel, but other persona is a violent, foul-mouthed criminal. Songoku and Kuririn participate in their first martial arts tournament — the Tenkaichibudokai — yet they fail to win by a narrow margin, thanks to Kame who has disguised himself to enter the event. They part ways to begin training on their own. Songoku soon runs into trouble with the world terrorist movement, RED RIBBON. He then finds himself training with his next teacher, the Sen-nin-sama (a cute, chubby cat). After training for three days, his power increases to the extent that he manages to annihilate the Red Ribbon HQ. He soon makes his first wish, by using the Dragon Balls and asks that a little boy's murdered father be resurrected.

PART II: THE TERROR OF PICCORO-DAI-MA-O

Once again, Songoku trains and signs up for the next Tenkaichibudokai. At this tournament, we are introduced to Tenshinhan and Chaozu, the pupils of Kame's nemesis. The final match is between Songoku and Tenshinhan and by a stroke of bad luck, Songoku loses. Suddenly, Kuririn is murdered just before Songoku is about to meet up with him and the rest of the gang. Songoku, burning with rage, pursues the assassin, but gets beaten to a pulp since he had used up all of his energy during the tournament. In the meantime, we learn of Piccoro —the Devil himself — who brings a reign of terror upon the world. Fearing the possibility of Songoku's death when he fails to return after many hours, Kame and Tenshinhan join forces. They search for the Dragon Balls to prevent the Devil from gaining whatever he wishes, and by #13, Kame has died. Tenshinhan is about to be killed by Piccoro when Songoku appears, after having taken the "Shin-sui" from Sen-nin-sama which unleashes the awesome power hidden within Songoku. He defeats Piccoro. Before he dies, Piccoro gives birth to his successor. God, knowing this, offers to train Songoku and this is an opportunity he obviously won't refuse. Kame, Kuririn and Chaozu are brought back to life by the Dragon Balls. At the next tournament, Songoku appears as a fully grown man, and he has become a completely new person. The main focus of the games is the climactic confrontation between the reborn Devil and Songoku. After a fierce fight, Songoku finally wins. Songoku then gets married to Chi Chi —a minor character who appeared briefly in #1 and who re-appeared at the fight.

PART III: SONGOKU'S TRUE IDENTITY

About five years after Songoku's last fight with the Devil, we find our that he has a son, Songohan, named after his "grandfather" and mentor. Songohan has a tail just like his father. A powerful alien soon descends on Earth and defeats Songoku with astonishing ease before revealing the truth about his identity. Songoku is a Saiya-jin, one of few survivors of the now extinct planet, Saiya. The Saiya-jin are a military race who are among the strongest beings in the entire universe and go about conquering and selling planets. Songoku was assigned to destroy Earth, but a childhood head injury had erased all of his Saiya memories. Songoku and Piccoro reluctantly cooperate to beat this alien who claims to be Songoku's brother. For a moment, it seems that the two are losing, but suddenly, Songohan becomes enraged by the sight of his father being tortured and attacks Raditsu, the alien. The invader loses his balance, and Songoku sacrifices himself to take this opportunity to destroy his evil brother, knowing that his friends will resurrect him by using the Dragon Balls.

In his life after death, Songoku goes to train with Kai-o-sama. Meanwhile on Earth, Songohan begins rigorous training under the Devil's strict observation, and they gradually become friends. A year after Songoku's death, he is ready to take on the two Saiya soldiers, Bejita and Noppa, who have come to complete Raditsu's failed mission. Due to miscalculations, Songoku is running behind schedule and fails to intercept the aliens upon

their arrival. While he catches up, his friends fight helplessly to the end. Yamucha dies first, quite abruptly, followed by Chaozu, and Tenshinhan who channels all of his energy into the powerful "Ki-Ko-Ho!" but to no avail and dies needlessly. The young Songohan unleashes his power and angers Nappa greatly. In retaliation, he is about to kill Songohan when Piccoro steps in to protect the boy and dies. In his last seconds of life, Piccoro laughs and cries, amused by the irony of dying to protect the son of his nemesis.

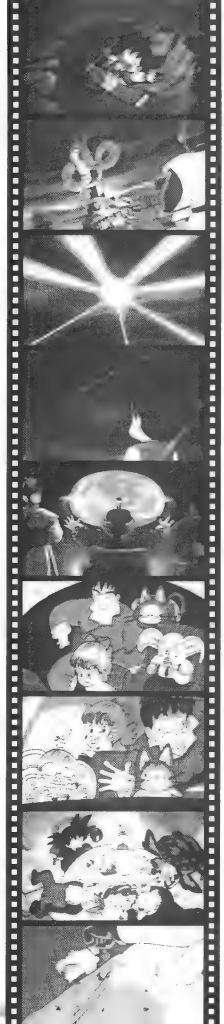
Songoku finally reaches the scene and, to his horror, finds nearly all of his friends dead. The knowledge that people can be brought back to life by the Dragon Balls only once sends Songoku over the edge. He tries to scare off his opponents, but they seem to want to fight to the end. He unleashes his "Kai-o-ken", a maneuver he learned from the Kai-o-sama which can multiply his strength by at most three times (although it has a serious drawback of draining one's endurance). Both Songoku and his remaining challenger Bejita are reduced to helpless, crawling heaps on the ground. Kuririn is about to deliver the final blow to the dying Bejita with a sword, when Songoku begs his friend to show mercy and let him go. He reluctantly complies and Bejita escapes.

PART IV: NAMEKKU SEI AND FREEZER

As explained in the previous part, the Devil had died. The Devil and God used to be one person (well, alien) therefore, if one died, so would the other. Once God was dead, the Dragon Balls disappeared off the face of the Earth along with him. Songoku and the other survivors decided that to revive the people who were killed by Bejita and Nappa, they would have to find God/Devil's planet of origin. Songoku is hospitalized and, for the moment, cannot move. Songohan, Kuririn and Buruma go off to the planet Nammeku (where God had come from) hoping to ask another "god" to help restore the Dragon Balls. Unfortunately, they run into Freezer and his entourage of elite fighters who all surpass Bejita in terms of strength. Freezer and his band of thugs had overheard, through Bejita's communicator, about the Dragon Balls. Seeking immortality, they have come to the same planet. Knowing there's no other way out, Buruma sends a distress signal to Songoku. In the meantime, Kuririn and Songohan rescue a Nammeku child, named Dende, from certain death.

On his way to the planet, Songoku trains in his space-pod in an environment that has 100 times the gravity he's experienced on Earth. After intense training, he arrives fully powered up, but in his first battle, his body suffers alot of damage. Songoku is put in a medical capsule that accelerates the healing process. To buy some time for Songohan, Kuririn, and Dende who must find the Dragon Balls that exist on Nammeku, Nail, the only fighter-type alien indigenous to the planet, plays a futile battle of endurance with Freezer. The heroes discover that the Dragon Balls on this planet can grant up to three wishes. The first wish brings Piccoro back to life and the second wish transports him directly to Nammeku. One last wish remains, but the Cho-ron-sama dies and the Dragon Balls which were his creations disappear with him. Having lost his chance at immortality, an enraged Freezer comes to finish off Bejita, Songohan and Kuririn.

Piccoro, who was transported to the wrong place on the planet, rushes to aid Songohan and, *en route*, encounters the dying Nail. Astonishingly similar in appearance to Piccoro, Nail offers his life-force, which could almost double Piccoro's powers. At first, Piccoro declines, but aware of Freezer's superior strength, they Yu-go (merge), leaving no physical traces of Nail. Piccoro makes it in time to witness Freezer's first transformation. He then pushes Freezer to the limit, forcing Freezer to mutate into his superior form. Dende is senselessly killed. When Songoku finally recovers from his wounds and returns to the fight, Bejita, who is on the brink of death, tearfully begs his fellow Saiya to see to it that Freezer is beaten by Saiya hands and wishes that he might someday be the warrior of legends, the Super-Saiya-Jin. When Freezer sees Songoku's face he recalls that this opponent is the spitting image of the last warrior who resisted him when he destroyed the Saiya homeworld. That "last warrior" was Songoku and Raddisu's father, Badakku. Songoku unexpectedly proves to be a tough match for Freezer and in the end uses his Genki-dama where he collects bits of energy from all living things on this and other nearby planets to attack Freezer with. Unfortunately, Freezer doesn't die as easily as hoped. Still astoundingly powerful, Freezer drags Kuririn into the air and blows him into bits. For the first time in his life, Songoku reaches a breaking point and explodes with fury. He really wants to *kill* Freezer... This triggers Songoku's transformation into the Super-Saiya-Jin. Freezer is at a loss.



Meanwhile back on Earth, when Piccoro was resurrected, so was God. The Dragon Balls were gathered quickly and used to revive the people who died at Nammeku. Thus, the Cho-ron-sama of Nammeku sei was also brought back to life and so were his Dragon Balls with its third, yet unused wish. The third wish was then used to transport all the people on the planet Nammeku to Earth with the exception of Freezer and Songoku. This plan succeeds, also bringing the resurrected Bejita back to Earth...

Freezer's attempt to kill Songoku at this stage backfires and he ends up slicing himself in half. Satisfied, Songoku almost leaves the planet, which is just minutes away from exploding, but there is still a tiny shred of decency left in him that motivates him to share enough of his power with Freezer to let them both escape. Nevertheless, Freezer tries to abuse this power, leaving Songoku with no choice but to shoot a fireball in his face...

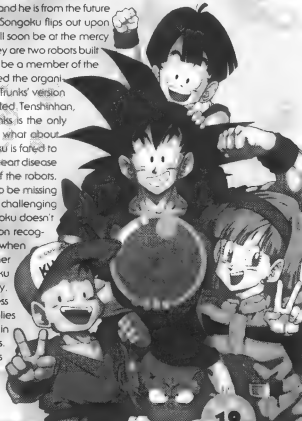
There are other matters of concern. The planet is about to self-destruct, but Songoku's space-pod, as well as Freezer's spacecraft are just useless scraps of metal...

PART V: THE TERROR FROM THE FUTURE

The Dragon Balls from the planet Nammeku permit the resurrection of people as many times as wanted. Kuririn is revived. An attempt to revive Songoku is made as well, but there is no need for it since it is discovered that Songoku had survived the planet's destruction after all, but his whereabouts are unknown. Meanwhile, Bejita reluctantly avoids wreaking havoc on Earth.

It's been one year since the incident with Freezer and the disappearance of Songoku. Freezer (patched up with mounds of prosthetics) and his father come to Earth for revenge. Predicting doom, Bejita, Piccoro, Songohan and the others give up all hope. Suddenly, the aura of a Super-Saiya jin is felt and the owner of this powerful presence effortlessly proceeds to kill Freezer and his dad in a jiffy. Everyone scrambles to seek out the source of this aura and find a young teenager with a huge sword. He hardly says anything other than to state that he is waiting for Songoku.

Songoku finally comes back to Earth and shows everyone a new trick he has acquired which enables him to transport himself anywhere just by using his mind... Songoku and the mysterious boy transform themselves into Super-Saiya fighters to perform some simple demonstrative tests, the results of which impress the youth. He explains that his name is Trunks and he is from the future — the son of Bejita and Duruma (Songoku flips out upon hearing this) and that the world will soon be at the mercy of two androids, #17 and #18. They are two robots built by the mad professor who used to be a member of the Red Ribbon until Songoku defeated the organization in his earlier adventures. In Trunks' version of the future, the robots have killed Tenshinhan, Kuririn, Songohan and Bejita. Trunks is the only fighter left. Songoku asks "Hey... what about me ???" and we learn that Songoku is fated to die shortly of a fatal and incurable heart disease — long before the appearance of the robots. Songoku is actually disappointed to be missing out on all the fighting (he thrives on challenging fights). Trunks wonders why Songoku doesn't fear the prospect of dying, but soon recognizes Songoku's potential strength when recalling how confident his mother was that, had he been alive, Songoku could have saved the world. Luckily, a cure for Songoku's upcoming illness exists in the future, so Trunks supplies him with the necessary medication in an attempt to redraw the timelines. Trunks soon departs and the warriors begin an intense training regimen in preparation for the future.



SPOTLIGHT

Ultimately, the day comes when #17 & #18 begin their trail of destruction and Songoku and the others turn up to fight them. However, Songoku who has been healthy since Trunks' visit, suddenly cannot fight at all, and collapses at the scene. For some reason, his heart problems were just starting now so he is rushed back home for treatment. The others destroy one robot easily and the second one escapes. Trunks returns to this timeline and sees the ruins of the first robot though he is completely puzzled. "Who/what is this? This isn't #17 or #18 ..." The remaining robot is still alive and he turns out to be the evil doctor himself. They all race to his secret lab in time to find him activating robots #17 & #18. These two turn on their loathsome creator and kill him; then they revive another robot, #16. Trunks is now completely confused. Piccoro, Bejita (who is now able to become a Super-Saiya fighter) and Trunks try to take on the robots with absolutely no effect. Piccoro, after being defeated, rushes to ask God to Yu-go with him. God eventually consents...

A time machine is found which is identical to that of Trunks' except for the fact that it is wrecked and old. A strange egg is found inside and so are some weird animal outer shells. People are being greedily drained of their life-forces by Seru, the terror from the future. He comes from a time beyond Trunks' and is a genetically engineered being whose only purpose is to grow stronger and stronger. He intends to fuse with #17 & #18 to become the strongest being in the universe. Full of confidence, he initiates a tournament where every volunteer is to fight him to the end. Songoku and the others have ten days to shape up. Using a mystical room up on God's palatial grounds, Songoku and Songohan are able to train a year's worth in a day. The others follow suit. However, Songoku realizes that simplicity of form is the best and concludes that being just a Super-Saiya fighter is the optimal form for combat. Bejita and Trunks, on the other hand, wastefully push past the barrier of Super-Saiya jin, only to realize their fault when trying to fight Seru so they are forced to train all over again.

The day finally comes for the tournament to begin and an obnoxious self-promoting celebrity, "Mr. Satan" (who holds the 'world belt' in wrestling) demands to be Seru's first and only challenger. Needless to say, he gets flicked away by Seru who doesn't exert even the slightest effort. Songoku enters the ring next... that's where #33 stops.

Heheh. It really is an amazing manga series. Compared to some of the other silly translations, I'm telling you, Dragon Ball would do REALLY well (With the exception of *Silent Mobius* and *Orion*...).

TRUNKS, THE STORY

This was a supplementary story included in #33 about Trunks' future. In the manga, Trunks is training as a Super-Saiya warrior with Songohan as his teacher (who is, incidentally, missing his left arm, which was lost in a previous fight with #17). The two robots, #17 & #18 appear nearby so Songohan goes after them. To keep the inexperienced Trunks out of the fight, he knocks the boy out. Songohan is confident, but nevertheless, he is killed. Trunks grieves deeply and vows to avenge his death. Buruma is working on a time machine for him to use so that he can get Songoku to repair the timeline, and we see him packing to go...

The TV episode aired on January the 4th was based on this, although the main difference is that Trunks inadvertently becomes a Super-Saiya jin when he finds the dead Songohan and becomes enraged ...

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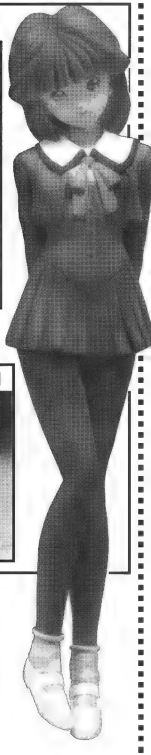

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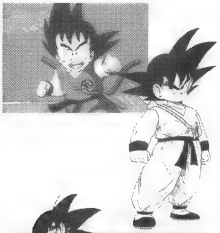
DRAGON BALL CHARACTERS

by Daichi Saeki

Songoku



The main character. The name is derived from the Chinese mythological figure of the same name. However, unlike the monkey king of the Chinese scriptures, the Songoku of this manga appears to be human in every way, with the exception of his simian tail. As long as his tail is attached, the sight of a full moon turns him into a giant ape-beast. His astounding strength is matched in magnitude only by his (sweetly dumb) innocence.

Buruma

The first (vital) character who draws Songoku into the search for the Dragon Balls, hence, introducing him to a whole new world of adventure. A techno-whiz like her father (the founder behind the world famous Capsule Corporation) who can irritate those around her with her selfish attitude. Always on the lookout for sexy men.

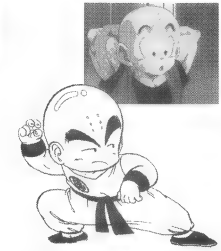
Songohan

There are two Songohans. One is Songoku's (deceased) adoptive grandfather and mentor. The other is Songoku's son, who possesses the human blood of his mother and the alien traits of his father — a mixed heritage which makes him innately stronger than his own father. This child also shares his father's heart of gold.

Kame-sennin (or Mutenroshi):

The Turtle Master. Sometimes uses the pseudonym "Jackie Chun". An old master of martial arts with a funky taste in clothes and a sex-crazed mind. He takes Songoku and Kuririn under his wing and teaches them everything he knows. Usually resides on a tiny island with his faithful giant sea turtle (Umi-game).

Kuririn



Songoku's closest friend who trained with him under Mutenroshi's guidance. Fiercely com-

petitive, however, the gap that stretches between his and Songoku's fighting abilities and luck with women becomes much cause for depression in the latter volumes of the series.

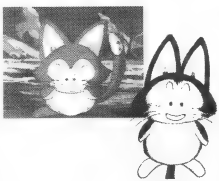
Sennin (or Sen-byo-sama)

The Car Master. Literally, a chubby, eight hundred year old car with a cane. A master among masters. Wiser and stronger than even the Mutenroshi. Lives atop the Karin-Tou (Karin Tower), just beneath God's palace.

Yamucha

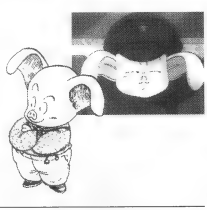
Initially making a living as a thief, he starts out as Songoku's enemy, but as he begins to fall in love with Buruma, a friendship develops. Since he is a mere human being, he turns out to be (possibly) the weakest member of the gang.

Pouaru



Yamucha's loyal sidekick. A floating cat with the ability to change shapes.

Oolong



A pig who, like Pouaru, is a shape-changer. Used to be a lawless prankster until Buruma reformed him.

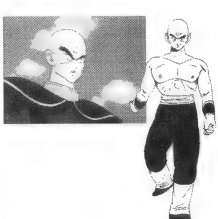
Lunch

A young woman with a split personality. Half of her is as sweet as a buttercup while the other half is a gun-toting, psychotic criminal. She takes refuge in the company of Kame-sennin and his pupils when Songoku rescues her from the police (who are not aware of her doubled persona). She develops a crush on Tenshinhan and departs in search of him. She never reappears.

Yajirobe

When Piccoro's terror reigns over the earth, he encounters and aids the weakened Songoku. Despite his inhuman strength, he is a bit of a coward and often chooses not to get involved with anything risky. Still, he has his moments of heroism. Has a massive appetite and cannot fly.

Tenshinhan



The three eyed fighter who used to be the disciple of Kame-sennin's rival ("Tsuru-sennin" or "Crane Master"). The only person with a mastery over the deadly "Ki-Ko-Ho" maneuver. Since his original intent was to kill Songoku, he is a man with little or no sense of humor. Once he befriended the irrepressible Songoku, his seriousness has become the butt of many jokes.

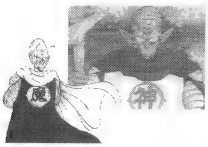
Chaozu

Tenshinhan's best friend and training companion. A short, quirky character with telekinetic powers and only one strand of hair on his head. Many times heroic, but not too bright.

Piccoro

The reborn Devil himself. However, by having the opportunity to raise Songohan for a while, he reluctantly demonstrates that he is not entirely evil after all. Further on in the story, he even experiences a paternal pride and affection for Songoku's son. Prefers a spartan lifestyle. Has absolutely no sense of humor whatsoever (for obvious reasons).

Kami(-sama)

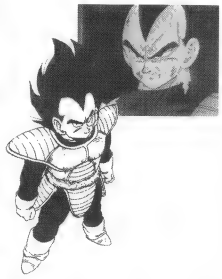


Piccoro's spiritual opposite — God. He and Piccoro used to be one before the latter was ejected in an attempt to cleanse the soul of all evil. It turns out that Kami and Piccoro are members of an alien race whose entire culture is based on magic.

Mr.Popo

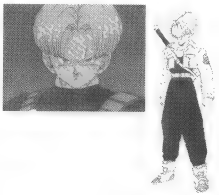
God's reliable adjutant. Origins unknown. Powerful in his own right.

Bejita



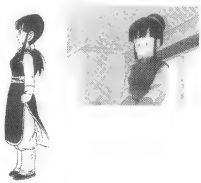
The prince of the Saiya people, and sole survivor of their home planet, other than Songoku. A man of enormous pride, he cannot stand the fact that Songoku always manages to be one step ahead of him in (combat) training. Born to fight. Sacrifices his sense of humor to act like a "tough guy".

Trunks



Bejita and Buruma's son. Similar to Songohan in terms of their mixed parentage. Uses his mother's time machine to travel to the past. Grew up in awe of the father he never knew, but grows to hate Bejita once they meet. Not goofy like his mother nor as icy as his father —somewhere in between. In one timeline, Songohan is his training master.

Chi Chi



Songoku's wife. The Ox King's only child. She does not forget the childhood promise that Songoku made to marry her when they were older, and confronts him at one of the martial arts tournaments. Angry that he does not recognize her, she enters the tournament herself and gets the chance to fight him before letting him have the satisfaction of knowing her name. He wins the match and by the end of the day, they are husband and wife. Considered by many as being the strongest person in the universe since she can overpower Songoku at times.

MANGA IN JAPAN

by Toren Smith

Manga ("comics") are popular in Japan to a degree that is unmatched anywhere else in the world. Of all the books and magazine published in Japan, some 40% are comics (1992 figures, sales by unit). A popular comic anthology magazine, SHONEN JUMP, has sold in excess of 5 million copies per week, and circulations over 1 million are relatively common. Manga are first published as magazines — ranging from saddle-stitched anthologies of about 350 pages to perfect-bound tomes of over 1000 pages. They tend to be cheap — from 230 to 500 yen, depending on page count. Publication schedules vary from weekly to monthly. Manga can be found for sale almost anywhere in Japan, from convenience stores to subway kiosks.

Each magazine carries from 15 to 35 stories, with an average page count per story of around thirty. These stories are almost always in black and white, sometimes with a page or two of color at the beginning. YON-KAMA ("four-panel") gag comics are also popular, and most magazine carry several strips. The magazines tend to be directed at specific audiences, with the primary divisions being young boys, young girls, adult men, and adult women. Within these divisions are dozens of subsections, and it is possible to find comics devoted to cooking, golf, pachinko, erotica and many other interests.

Most of the stories are serializations (some running for thousand of pages), and are regularly collected into books (TANKOBON) of 180 to 300 pages. These books are printed on high-quality paper (as opposed to the cheap, recycled stock of the magazines) and sell from 390 to 500 yen. Sales on the most popular series can be enormous — Takahashi Rumiko's 15-volume comedy/soap opera MAISON IKKOKU has sold over 20 million copies.

Unit sales of manga magazines have almost doubled over the last ten years (to 1.5 billion copies), with sales in some areas, such as adult comics, almost tripling (from 311 million to over 915 million). Sales of children's comic have stayed relatively static, at about 750 million. This increase in adult comics sales and decrease in children's comics is probably a function of the aging of the Japanese population in general. Sales of all types of manga magazines accounted for almost 5.4 billion yen in 1992. The collections have more than doubled their sales since 1982 (to almost 500 million units), and tripled their total cash sales to over two trillion yen.

Boy's comics (SHONEN MANGA) represent the largest single proportion of the market, at 39% (as of 1992). Girl's comics (SHOJO MANGA) account for 8.8%, making the children's market almost 50% of the total industry. Adult comics account for the rest of the sales. Magazines for young adults, both men and women (largely situation comedies, sports, and action/adventure comics) make up a solid 35.8% of the remaining half. The remainder is divided up among "Lady's Comics" (7.9%) and the miscellaneous types (YON-KAMA, pachinko, golf, erotica, etc.) at 8.5%.

While comics are often somewhat looked down upon in Japan, and even considered by some to be "just for kids", they are taken far more seriously than in most of the rest of the world, where they are commonly "getthoized" and sneered at as being suitable only for subliterates. The popularity of manga in Japan has long been a subject of discussion and controversy. I feel it is partly linked to the Japanese ideographic writing system. Rather than each panel being a combination of abstract codes (alphabet-based writing) and pictures, the language and the images form a more easily assimilatable pattern for people used to an ideographic writing system. PET (positron emission topography) studios at McGill University have borne this out, showing brain activity in opposite hemispheres for readers of English and Japanese.

But both process images in the same hemisphere — the one also used by the Japanese readers to process the written language.

However, other forces are at work. The delayed introduction of television in Japan, and the almost total destruction of the thriving comics industry in the 1950s also played a pivotal role. The American comic book industry is now primarily a dead-end: a collector's field. "We've turned into the Franklin Mint," grumbled an editor from Marvel, the largest comics publisher in America in a recent interview.

Perhaps the easiest way to perceive the place of manga within Japan's culture and publishing industry is to consider it a true, separate media — not unlike television. Comics in America are, by and large, stuck in a rut of costumed super heroes. By contrast, in Japan, the manga art form is used to deal with every conceivable aspect of life, from drama to humor to education (a recent release is the "Manga Guide to Estimating Sewer Construction Costs").

Being a true popular media as opposed to a subculture, manga appeal to a wide cross-section of the public. They are also produced by a wide variety of people. Artistic standards for manga are rather looser than for comics in most of the rest of the rest world, with a strong story taking center stage. As long as the artist meet a minimum standard of competency (and has an appealing style), they'll be accepted — as long as the stories are good. There is a popular type of YON-KAMA called salary man comics that are usually drawn by disgruntled ex-office workers. The style is simple in the extreme and could certainly be mastered by almost anyone with a few months of efforts. But it is the humor and insight of these comics that make them popular, not their artistic rendering. Here manga could almost be compared to the American newspaper comic strips where a number of great gag writers with marginal artistic talents have found success (such as Gary Larson and Cathy Guisewaite).

This has led to more of a decentralization of manga artists, and an emphasis on combination writer/artists. Many manga artists that work in a particular field (such as pachinko or golf comics) often have an expert's knowledge of the field. The manga KACHO SHIMA KASOKU, by Hirokane Kenshi, tells the ongoing story of a salary man named Shima and his business dealings. Severe pivotal episodes in the comic were recently treated to an in-depth analysis by business expert Watanabe Toshiya, who generally gave them his stamp of approval.

The manga field also offers enormous opportunities to women, because of their large representation among readers (close to 50%, according to some reports). Probably close to half of the MANGAKA ("manga creators") working in Japan are women. Most work on comics aimed at women or girls (just as most men work on comics aimed at men and boys), but many have crossed the boundaries and achieved substantial success (such as the above-mentioned Takahashi Rumiko, whose comics are aimed primarily at males). Many of the comics aimed at young adults contain a mix of MANGAKA, and appeal to both sexes — with the notable exception of "Lady's Comics" and the erotic manga.

Manga publishers in general and publishers of erotic manga in particular recently received a severe blow. Erotic manga had been pushing the boundaries of acceptability for some years. The bulk of these comics were low-circulation magazines sold by small companies, and were often hard to find outside of specialty stores. But more graphic nudity and depictions of sex began to appear in the more mainstream magazines. Practically all the publishers were to blame, but the ax fell on SHOGAKUKAN, whose biweekly, magazine "Young Sunday" was publishing a comic called ANGEL.

ANGEL was, admittedly, pretty extreme. The art, by an artist working under the pseudonym "U-Jin", had a very clean, attractive "big-eyed" animation style, but the story concerned high-school students having sex in every conceivable manner, and often technically violated the government restrictions on published erotica. In early 1991, a mother of a young boy in Osaka was, she later said, "tricked" by the cute cover art and innocent-sounding title into buying a copy for her son. When she later saw the inside pages, she was enraged. The group she formed spawned countless others, all fighting to control what they saw as the pernicious spread of sexually explicit comics, and to curb their sale to young people. Their efforts eventually led to "voluntary" labeling of adult comics by the publishers.

However, as is often the case, the result has been very effective censorship. Many distributors, especially those in the Kansai area, will simply not carry a comic with the dreaded "Adults Only" (SEINEN) label. This has led many artists and publishers to carry on games of brinkmanship with the groups. Since putting a label on a book can mean a 50% or more drop in sales, many artists and publishers refuse. This has led the groups to publish their own lists of "forbidden comics" (one recent list contained 83% of all comics released that month) which are sent to comics stores and distributors.

The battle has cooled in recent months, but many smaller publisher were forced out of business, and many artists have been profoundly unhappy with the restrictions it has placed on their work, not to mention the drop in their income. Still, many are grateful that the government did not get involved. Many of the groups were pushing for much more restrictive standards and explicit warning labels (one such commonly suggested label read "YUGAI TOSHO" — "Harmful Books"). "It's hard to defend comics like ANGEL," lamented one editor, "but many well-written comics with erotic themes have suffered as well."

Manga has been slow to spread overseas, for a number of reasons. For most of the western countries, the comics market was so small it was hardly worth the effort needed to get the rights, translate, retouch the sound effects in the artwork, and flip the pages to read left-to-right. For Asia, piracy was so rampant that there was very little incentive to legally purchase the rights.

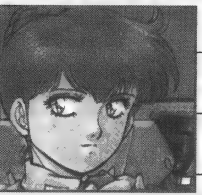
However, in the 1980's, the growing number of fans of Japanese animation in America has led two companies to try publishing manga in the US. The first company was VIZ COMMUNICATIONS, a branch of SHOGAKUKAN, a major publishing giant. The second was FIRST COMICS, a small American comics publisher from Chicago. Viz's first effort, KAMUI GAIDEN ("The Legend of Kamui," which I co-translated) and LONE WOLF AND CUB (translated by Dana Lewis) hit the stands within days of each other, and both were major hits. That is, hits by the standards of the American comics industry. The average black and white comic in America sold (at the time) around 6,000 copies. Both the manga had sales in excess of 40, 00 copies. Within a few months, Dana Lewis and I started our own company, STUDIO PROTEUS, to publish the comics that we personally wanted to do.

Since 1986, the black and white comics market in America has imploded, severely damaging manga sales. The average manga now sells 12,000 copies per month. FIRST has gone out of business, and ECLIPSE has dropped manga publication entirely. VIZ and STUDIO PROTEUS (which co-publishes with DARK HORSE COMICS) now publish 95% of all the manga or manga-related comics in America. However, recently a spate of Japanese animation videos subtitled or dubbed in English has rekindled interest in manga, especially those with animation tie-ins. STUDIO PROTEUS and DARK HORSE have five different series per month scheduled through 1994, with more planned well into 1996. Most have an animation video tie-in.

In Europe, both manga and Japanese animation have made a tremendous success, especially in France and Italy. Girls in France are especially fond of MAISON IKKOKU, retitled "Juliette, je t'aime," and can be seen in the streets wearing or carrying a wide variety of character goods, from purses to notebooks. EDIZIONE STAR COMICS in Italy has a thriving line of manga comics, including Shirow Masamune's KOKAKU KIDOTAI and Fujishima Kosuke's AA MEGAMI-SAMA both of which are due to appear in America sometime soon.

Recently, Japanese publishers have had some success in selling their comics to reputable publishers in Asia. These publishers have begun to crack down on piracy, making it increasingly worthwhile to publish manga. The result has been an unprecedented explosion of manga sales in Asia. An editor at KODANSHA recently told me that it looked like manga were, in a few years, going to be as big in places like Singapore and Thailand as they presently are in Japan.

My personal hope for the future of manga throughout the world is that some of the more serious, literary manga will find a home. Most of the manga being published outside Japan has been pure entertainment. There's nothing wrong with that per se, but I look forward to the day when we can publish manga such as Tezuka Osamu's HI NO TORI or Uchida Shungiku's MABOROSHI NO FUTSU SHOJO. ✍



SILENT MÖBIUS: THE MANGA

by Daichi Saeki

We give here a brief synopsis of the *Silent Möbius* manga by Kia Asamiya. Viz has completely translated volumes 1 & 2, as well as the first story of volume 3. We will focus more on the stories untouched by Viz and the parts they omitted. We would like to clarify one fact before starting. A.M.P. stands for Attacked Mystification Police, *not* Abnormal Mystery Police as Viz puts it. If you look at the Japanese publication, it is clearly printed in English that it is Attacked M... I wonder why Viz decided to change it...

STAGE 1
SIDE 1: 2026

CHAPTER 01: CYBER-PSYCHIC CITY

This is the first story concerning the A.M.P. We are immediately introduced to the members, just as they are handling a typical case involving the Lucifer Hawk. Later on, one of their foes attacks Katsumi and tries to engulf her. He does not succeed and so he possesses her body instead. The A.M.P. is caught off-guard, but Katsumi manages to defeat it with the help of her father's pendant.

CHAPTER 02: NAMI YAMIGUMO

The entire story revolves around Nami and the mysterious, disciplined family from which she comes from. She is put to a test to see if she has the unique qualities it would take for her to continue the family's traditions. She proves herself a worthy successor to the family dynasty.

CHAPTER 03: KIDDY PHENIL

Kiddy Phenil is revisited by a horror from her past — Megadyne 2035618, a killer robot that had once slaughtered many at random and nearly killed her 3 years ago while she was still a rookie cop. Although her body had been severely 'chopped up', she was saved by an artificial exo-skeleton which replaced approximately 70% of her body. Driven by fear and a desire for revenge, she added an armor coating. They have a rematch.

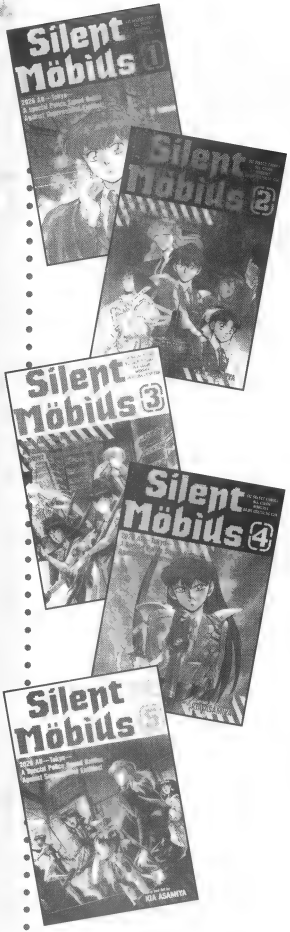
CHAPTER 04: INTO THE INTERMISSION

10 short deviations into humour involving the members of the A.M.P.

Side 2: 2027

CHAPTER 05: KATSUMI LIQUEUR

Katsumi is attacked by a Lucifer Hawk in the middle of the city. She is hospitalized, but soon after her quick recovery, she is brainwashed and takes Lebia's valued bike, Huey, for a ride. She is driven to find the sword-king Grospolina. When she breaks the seal holding him back, he becomes a part of her and therefore she hardly feels his weight. She uses him successfully to defeat the Lucifer Hawk who had hospitalized her.



CHAPTER 06: YUKI SAIKO

Yuki starts doubting the validity of her role in the A.M.P. Rally gives her a week off so she makes plans to visit some childhood friends. She soon discovers that all but one are dead, killed and absorbed by Annie, the sole survivor. She is forced to recall her true identity — she is one of several test subjects for the YPLER weapon. They were designed as test soldiers, but the project was quickly dismantled by the police. Yuki's true name is #B-007 (hm... we wonder where that reference came from...) Annie soon tries to kill her as well, but the emotions of Yuki's deceased friends residing in Annie's mind protect Yuki from any harm while she destroys Annie.

CHAPTER 07: INTO THE INTERMISSION 2

Lebia engages in a grave, formal discussion with Rally, but we soon learn that Lebia simply wants to find a way to get Nami to don the standard A.M.P. uniform. Lebia motivates the others to make similar efforts by bribing them with (false) promises of a luxury estate by the sea to the person who succeeds first. Kiddy and Yuki make attempts to no avail before Nami pounds out a confession from Katsumi. To get even, Nami throws Lebia's disks into the garbage, gives Katsumi a **very** spicy rice cracker to eat, and the last frame shows Nami with a devilish look in her eyes saying "now, it's Kiddy's turn... "

CHAPTER 08: LEBIA MAVERICK

A two-parter continued in Side 3.

Side 3: 2027

CHAPTER 08: LEBIA MAVERICK

The conclusion to the last story in book 2. This time, we learn of Lebia's true identity (an alpha class Visionnaire, that being a person who can travel through cyberspace). She is a unique 'alpha' class, and she has the unique property of having her 'mind' located in space, aboard a satellite which has a memory capacity 3,000 times greater than what can be found in an ordinary Visionnaire.

CHAPTER 09: ROBERT DE VICE

This story has not been translated by Viz yet. It also is one of our personal favorites. As you can tell from the title, the story is about Robert (or Roy as he is called by his buddies) and his tightly-knit team of fellow police officers. His group is assigned to help research the qualities of a potent new drug called the 'domuru'. They didn't know that 'research' implied that they were the guinea pigs. Minute doses of the drug had been regularly administered to them, in hopes of creating a breed of 'super cop'. A dangerously excessive dose is given to Aida — Roy's best friend — and one friend is forced to kill another to prevent Aida's mutation into an unstoppable monster. The team sniffs out the place where the drug is manufactured to permanently stop all production. What they find is a strange Lucifer Hawk-like creature who is guarded by a little girl (who's mind is actually taken over by yet another Lucifer Hawk). Roy's captain and friends become trapped under rubble, but he cannot bring himself pull the trigger at the little girl. He sees a vision of her, remembering the way he had to kill Aida, but he finds the true reasons to kill her and sends the Lucifer Hawks back to the Nemesis.

CHAPTER 10: INTO THE INTERMISSION 3

This time we get 11 super-warped Silent Möbius character stories.

-Silent Möbius Mechanic Designs-

A special section with mecha designs of Roy's power suit, the numerous Spinners, Lebia's bike Huey and more.

CHAPTER 11: RALLY CHEYENNE

Another one of our favorite stories, explaining the true identity of the leader of the A.M.P. The A.M.P. is kept perpetually busy throughout the city fighting Lucifer Hawks. Meanwhile, back at headquarters, Rally is visited by her younger sister, Roza. Roza

has been training in the Nemesis and her intention is to bring Rally back with her or kill her if she resists. Rally chooses to confront her. Lebia overhears the conversation about Rally being a Lucifer Hawk, but refuses to believe the facts, even after being informed by Rally herself, and is beaten by Roza. Rally's rage draws her into the fight. A circle forms above her head and she mercilessly shatters all the bones in Roza's left arm. Grospolina senses the ongoing fight and orders the A.M.P. to assemble at headquarters. Roza, in retaliation, blocks all air flow into the rooms, and nearly suffocates the A.M.P. to death, but then Katsumi breaks through the oxygen barrier in her spinner and attacks Roza. Rally commands Roza to leave and then explains to everyone that she is half human, half Lucifer Hawk. She understood that some people were guilty of sealing the Lucifer Hawks away, but did not agree that the systematic extermination of humankind was justified as a form of revenge. Thus, she founded the A.M.P. to protect the innocent. She asks the team if they still trust her. Naturally, they still do. She explains to them that the reason that the A.M.P. is an all-female group is that as creators of life, they are endowed with the strength for confronting the Lucifer Hawks' domain of death.

Rally: "The battle has just begun..."

STAGE 2
Side 4: 2028

CHAPTER 12: PRESENTIMENT

The A.M.P. are going about their daily routines, busy fighting the regular onslaught of opponents from the Nemesis... too busy to notice that they are being observed by two individuals. One is a mysterious woman with incredible power (more than even Katsumi), and the other is a Lucifer Hawk who keeps on picking at Katsumi about her tendency to guard those she loves, namely Roy. We are also introduced to the mammoth transporter plane, the Shimurugu.

CHAPTER 13: OFFENSIVE AND DEFENSIVE BATTLE

This is basically a continuation of the last story. The A.M.P. is paid a surprise visit by their new boss, Mana Isozaki, the mystery woman who was observing them in the last chapter. Lebia searches for data on her, but to no avail. Nami, who uncharacteristically fainted during her last battle, is in the hospital and is visited by her sister. The Lucifer Hawk from that last battle tries to unite with her. The A.M.P. arrive in time to see the united monster. They know that any damage inflicted on the Lucifer Hawk would also be felt by Nami and are troubled. The tough new boss Mana is then forced to display her true power. She unleashes an incredible aura of power, making Katsumi feel inferior, and defeats the Lucifer Hawk. Soon after, she runs into Nami's sister, Nana, and some details emerge about a fierce battle that has taken place long ago, involving the two of them and a Lucifer Hawk. We learn of nothing more about Mana except that the A.M.P. and Mana are still adjusting to one another. She tells Rally that "they still have a lot to learn, but they're usable..."

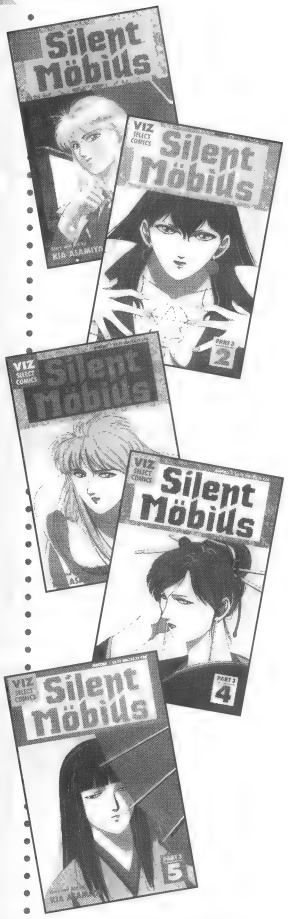
CHAPTER 14: INTO THE INTERMISSION 4

The A.M.P. are celebrating the arrival of their new boss. Mana has too much to drink and throws up, Katsumi is beaten up, Yuki falls asleep amidst the noise and everyone ignores Lebia's Rebukes Cubes and other mathematical puzzles...

CHAPTER 15: LABYRINTH

This is a story completely revolving around Yuki. She is brought back through time to 1991 by a Lucifer Hawk and a mystical coffee mill. She meets a boy named Toru and becomes friends.

(For the character guide, see in PA #18.)



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DARK HORSE COMICS

by John Dennett
with John Weeks and Heather Gridley

Who The Heck Is Dark Horse Comics, and Why Are They Putting Out So Many Manga Books?

In 1985, a successful northwestern comics retailer named Mike Richardson decided the time had come to become a publisher himself. Armed only with the philosophy that comic writers and artists would create better, more interesting stories if they owned the rights to their work, Richardson and editor Randy Stradley set out to attract top-name international talents to the newly formed Dark Horse Comics. Richardson was also adamant about producing a line of books that would appeal to a wide variety of readers.

In July of 1986, Dark Horse Comics debuted in the industry with the release of its appropriately titled anthology, Dark Horse Presents. Dark Horse Comics grew from that first book, and now publishes a variety of award-winning original, creator-owned and licensed properties. Their full line of titles include superheroes, movie adaptations, action/adventure, science fiction, horror, westerns, classics, fantasy, sports, anthologies, modern classics, monsters, cutting-edge alternative comics, and, of course, manga!

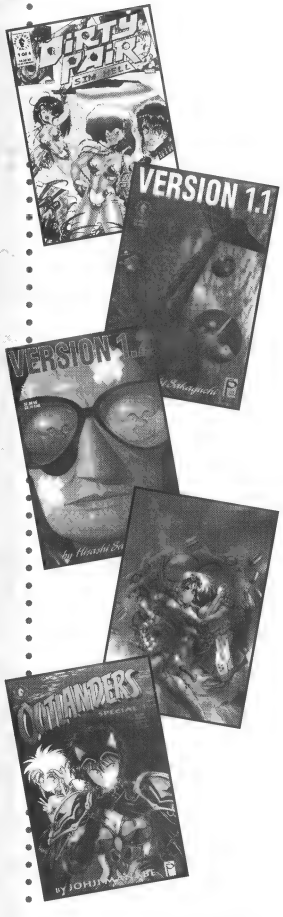
The big manga news at Dark Horse is its successful offering of both imported and home-grown goodies! On the home front, the unstoppable writer/artists Adam Warren is back with The Dirty Pair: Sim Hell (four-issue monthly miniseries; US$2.50, CAN$3.15). This time the "Lovely Angels" of anime combat simulation gone bonkers. Plunging from one nightmarish sim to the next, the Angels must fight through each terrifying scenario to the end in hope that the simulation will terminate before they suffer severe neurological damage or death!

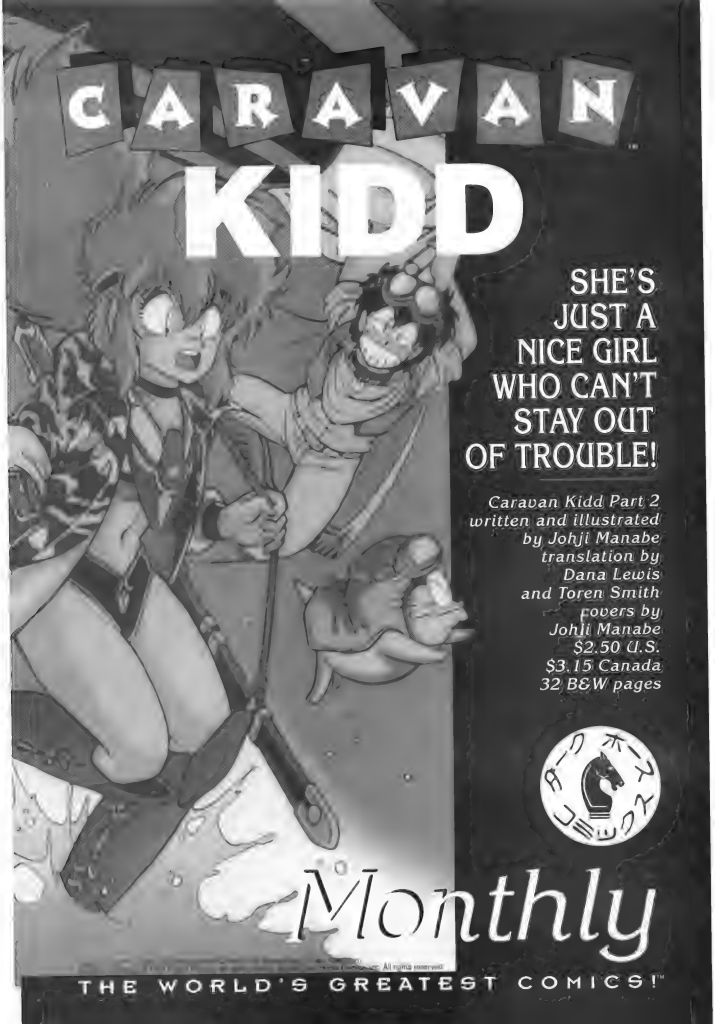
Looking across the Pacific, we encounter another cyber-nightmare in the form of Hishashi Sakaguchi's manga creation, Version (monthly US$2.50, CAN$3.15). The central threat of this modern-day sci-fi adventure is EGOS, the world's first sentient biochip. After absorbing all computer-accessible knowledge within reach and growing a bio-synthetic body for itself, EGOS retreats to earth's waterways to decide the fate of mankind! In the last two issues of the first series (appearing in June and July respectively), our human heroes have tracked EGOS to Australia's Great Barrier Reef for a cataclysmic confrontation. But "it ain't over'till it's over", because August brings Version 2.1 and the renewed threat of human extinction! Sakaguchi's words and pictures are translated for the English language by Alan Gleason and Toren Smith of Studio Proteus, and each issue's cover is graced with the eye-popping computer-enhanced art of Jack Harris.

Another mainstay of the Dark Horse manga line has graduated to a second series this summer with Caravan Kidd Part 2 (monthly US$2.50, CAN$3.15). Writer/illustrator Johji Manabe drags readers along for another wild ride with rebel robot swordswoman Mian Toris and her reluctant servants Babo and Wataru as they unsuccessfully attempt to lay low and avoid those nasty confrontations with Empress Shion and her agents of the Empire. Caravan Kidd Part 2 is yet another outstanding translation by crack Studio Proteans Dana Lewis and Toren Smith.

The storylines of several manga published by Dark Horse are nearing their conclusions this summer. Yoshikazu Yasuhiko's futuristic civil war saga, The Venus Wars, ends with a bang this August in The Venus Wars II #15 (monthly US$2.50, CAN$3.15). If you missed out on the action and intrigue so far, Dark Horse is making it easy for you with the release of The Venus Wars Volume One (US$13.95, CAN$17.45) appearing in August. Alan Gleason and Toren Smith do the translation honors.

Orion by master storyteller Masamune Shirow reaches its epic climax in issue #6 (US$3.95, CAN$4.95) this July. In addition to its unique take on religion and mythology, Dark Horse offers other benchmark works by Shirow including the Appleseed 4 Collection (US$12.95, CAN$16.50), and Dominion (US$13.95, CAN$17.45). Earlier this year they even imported copies of Shirow's breathtaking Intron Depot (US$39.95, CAN$47.95) all the way from Japan. Talk about commitment!

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VIZ COMICS VIZIONS OF AMERICA

San Francisco-Based VIZ Comics
By Trish Ledoux

Viz Comics, one of the world's leading publishers of English-translated manga, was founded by General Manager and Executive Editor Seiji Horibuchi when he incorporated the company in July 1986. A subsidiary of Japan's megalithic publishing house Shogakukan, Inc., Viz began co-publishing a line of manga which included titles such as AREA 88, KAMUI, MAI THE PSYCHIC GIRL and later, XENON, with Northern California's Eclipse Comics. After the contract with Eclipse expired in November of 1988, Viz began publishing and distributing its comics independently, which it continues to do to this day.

New and exciting projects on the horizon include manga wunderkind RUMIKO TAKAHASHI's MAISON IKKOKU, translated and published in English for the first time this June in a 40-pages b&w format. Excitement on all our Takahashi's titles is running at an all-time high these days - after ANIMERICA reporter Jeff Yang published a short piece on RANMA 1/2 in MADEMOISELLE magazine (which has something 5.6 million readers, according to Jeff), we've been approached by the DETROIT NEWS, the WIRELESS NEWS FLASH AND RADIO NETWORK (heard on hundreds of stations around the world), ELLE magazine, even the national syndicated TV program ENTERTAINMENT TONIGHT, who plan to do a piece on RANMA in June. Naturally, we'll keep you posted as things develop.

Our CRYING FREEMAN GRAPHIC NOVEL looks to be a mega-hot seller when it's published this August, as does the grand finale of our long-running CRYING FREEMAN manga series, which come to an end in September. Series writer KAZUO KOIKE and the talented RYOICHI IKEGAMI really are the "dynamic duo" of the manga world!

PIXY JUNKET, one of our latest series, is doing well among fans of fantasy and light comedic adventure. The manga style of artist/creator PURE has been compared to that of APPLESEED creator, uber artist MASAMUNE SHIROW. Look for our exclusive interview, as well as the continuation of our special color manga feature, THE CRIMSON PIG, "THE AGE OF FLYING BOATS," published in English for the first time starting in July.

As most of us know by now, "THE AGE OF FLYING BOATS" was first published in MODEL GRAPHIX and is the inspiration for last summer's blockbuster film.

But the hottest news I've got to share with you is that, after a long absence, KAORU SHINTANI's incredible series AREA 88 will once again be published in English! After GENOCYBER creator TONY TAKEZAKI's AD POLICE comes to an end in the pages of ANIMERICA in September, AREA 88 will take its place indefinitely. You heard it here first!

In upcoming months, look for more exciting manga project from Viz such as the NAUSICAÄ GRAPHIC NOVEL, which continues the proud tradition established by the other titles in Tokuma's "Magical Adventure Series" such as MY NEIGHBOR TOTORO, KIKI'S DELIVERY SERVICE and LAPUTA, CASTLE IN THE SKY. The NAUSICAÄ GRAPHIC NOVEL is a hardback volume you'll want to keep in your library for years to come.

Our thanks to everyone who's supported Viz throughout the years by reading our manga. There's nowhere I'd rather be working right now than right here. Without the continued support of readers like you, Viz Comics would still be nothing more than a gleam in Seiji Horibuchi's eye.

I began with Viz in August of last summer, almost immediately after returning from a year abroad studying Japanese at Tokyo's prestigious International Christian University. Sometimes I wish I had been able to wait a little longer and catch my breath before jumping into such a huge commitment, but "wait and see" has never been a part of my life's philosophy. As always, I'm happiest when I'm busiest.

FROM THE GLACIER

ANTARCTIC PRESS

Some background information on ANTARCTIC PRESS
by Pat Duke

The Antarctic Press was formed in 1985 by Ben Dunn and Mark Ripley. Ben, creator of Ninja High School, managed the company from his home in San Antonio, TX. The Antarctic Press's flagship was "Mangazine", which has the distinction of being the first ever manga-inspired comic in the United States. Mangazine is currently being published on a monthly schedule having just released no.22 (a feat for any independent comic). They later went on to publish the first three issues of Ninja High School(NHS) before it was obtained and reprinted by Eternity Comics (who currently publishes the series and has just released no.37).

Then in 1989, the company was restructured into its current form. That was also the year that the first Ninja High School Yearbook was released. This comic was the very first to allow fans and readers to actively do stories and comics and have them published on a consistent basis, and was one of the first annuals for an independent comic. The Yearbook, now in its fifth year, was so successful that the Antarctic Press did a companion series called the Girls of Ninja High School, now in its fourth year. In 1989, Antarctic Press also released the Ninja High School Perfect Memory. This was one of the first independent comics to outline its universe in a complete format in order to provide its fans a ready reference source. In 1992, Antarctic Press released Robert DeJesus' Small Bodied Ninja High School. Taking advantage of the current Super-Deformed rage in Japan, this comic has brought this popular style to the U.S. Currently in development are three new regular NHS series: Quagmire, USA; Ninja University; and Inter-Stellar Conglomerate. In 1992, Antarctic Press also released its first issue of Dojinshi. This was the first comic totally devoted to the world of Japanese fanzines. It has become such a hit that a new comic devoted to Japanese adult fanzines is being released (Already out: this April! CJP) in 1993: H-Bomb. Antarctic press is currently working with Comic Market of Japan to bring even more manga to the US. In 1991, Antarctic Press released the historic rebirth of Albedo. Steve Gallacci's influential furry title that continues to make waves even today. Currently, an Albedo Color Special is planned for a June release. This will be its first time in color.

Antarctic Press has always been a company unafraid to experiment. While everyone else is doing superheroes, Antarctic Press focuses its attention on manga, anime, anthropomorphic, creator-owned projects, and just plain fun comics. Antarctic Press has published over 100 comics since its inception and has an almost 100% on-time record. Its growth has nearly quadrupled in the past 2 years and Antarctic is continually expanding its line. New Antarctic Press is run from a spacious 2,200 sq. foot office complex and comes with as many as 12 titles a month including Albedo, Tigers of Terra, numerous NHS spin-offs, and, of course, Mangazine. Having survived seven years in a rapidly changing market, Antarctic Press is one of the few remaining success stories in independent comics. This is generally attributed to the philosophy of Antarctic Press which maintains that a consistent high-quality book which comes out on time will find a niche in the market; a good fun story will always have an audience.

Currently, Antarctic Press is under contract to publish such high-profile comics as Project A-Ko and Fantastic Panic, which are making an enormous impact on the Japanese-inspired manga market. The future looks bright for Antarctic Press, with many new and exciting projects on the horizon. Antarctic Press should be entertaining fans of anime for years to come, as well as introducing new fans to the world of manga!

DESPERATELY SEEKING MANGA

by Normand Bilodeau
and Patrick Lapointe

This being the first installment of DSM, our staff decided to compile quick reviews of titles you should look for. Call it a broad look at the horizon, either as an introduction to mangas or simply as good reading suggestions. Of course, you will also get the latest news, short reviews and summaries of current and future titles.

Before you plunge into the piece, we would like to point out a word that caught our attention: book. Many of the reviewers and readers of manga freely use it instead of "comics". Think a while. We believe you will agree: manga is a visual storybook, rather than just another comic book. Enjoy.

MAI THE PSYCHIC GIRL

After the Robotech fury, comic book publishers started releasing Japanese manga translations and adaptations. VIZ published the book that became our first contact with manga: MAI THE PSYCHIC GIRL, written by Kazuya Kudo and illustrated by the very (very... OK, very very very!!) talented Ryoichi Ikega. Kudo has been writing since 1975 and his credits include PINEAPPLE ARMY and NOBUNAGA, where he teamed up again with Ikega. Our first reaction to Ikega's art was "What? He draws a complete series in such a realistic style!?!". Furthermore, he draws all his series (that we know of) this way. Another of his big successes is CRYING FREEMAN.

This formidable duo tells the tale of Mai, a young student who becomes the prize in a war between two very powerful organizations. Their interest lies in the fact that she possesses psychic powers. Ikega's ultra-realistic art marvelously serves Kudo's script. The story is solid and could bore younger readers used to simple stories where everything is resolved in a single episode/single issue. In Mai, the story unfolds slowly and finally reaches its climax at the very end.

Our opinion: you must have at least one series by Ikega, and this book is perfect. Luckily for you, Mai is again available in graphic novel format... What are you still doing there? We told you it's perfect. Go and get one. Now! Run!! FASTER!!!

MAI THE PSYCHIC GIRL, by Kazuya Kudo, Art by Ryoichi Ikegami
Graphic novel format, four books, VIZ COMMUNICATIONS

Normand Bilodeau

LONE WOLF AND CUB

Power. Finesse. Emotions. Lone Wolf and Cub.

One of the greatest classical Japanese stories available in English, LONE WOLF AND CUB has marked the North American market for good. The artistic team of Kazuo Koike (writer) and Goseki Kujuma (artist) have created one of the most popular manga stories of Japan. Its traditional elements, its mythical scale, and its spirit make LONE WOLF AND CUB a must read for anyone who wants to touch a part of Japan. The English version was published by First Publishing (no longer in business).

The story is set in feudal Japan (Tokugawa period). Itto Ogami is the Shogun's Kaishakunin executioner, the man who speeds to their deaths daimyos and their families after ritual suicide (seppuku). Framed by the rival Yagyu clan (one of the great school of swordmanship and also the official assassins of the shogunate), Ogami defies the shogun's order to commit seppuku, and, from then on, "fights" a life of revenge to succeed in his ultimate duty. Yet he carries with him the seed of life, his young son Daigoro. Together, father and son — Lone Wolf and Cub — they travel the assassin's road.

The figure of the ronin (the unattached samurai), the power of swordmanship, the martial mystique and the finesse of the web woven by Koike and drawn by Kojima build a dramatic story that leaves no spirit untouched. LONE WOLF AND CUB, the myth that lives.

LONE WOLF AND CUB, by Kazuo Koike, art by Goseki Kojima
FIRST PUBLISHING INC.

Patrick Lapointe

NINJA HIGH SCHOOL

Aah, the difficult task of reviewing NINJA HIGH SCHOOL (NHS) objectively when one is a fan. Created by Ben Dunn as a three-issue mini-series, NHS met with such success that Ben Dunn continued it. Today, the series nears issue number 40 and has carved itself a comfortable niche in the market.

Inspired by Dunn's discovery of manga during his youth, NHS has come full circle, with fans even in Japan! Furthermore, NHS will soon be drawn by a young Japanese artist, Takeshi Suzuki. The mini-series introduced the readers to Quagmire USA where Jeremy Feeple finds himself the object of a violent dispute between a young (and cute) ninja and an extra-terrestrial princess. The series takes the mini-series, and develops further many characters with a touch of humor highly influenced by Japanese anime. Almost a challenge to a fan's knowledge.

Ben Dunn is an artist we would classify as "honest". His backgrounds show detailed work and his documentation is precise. We think that NHS easily holds its own when compared to many Japanese manga. As a tribute to NHS' success, Eternity has assembled the first part of the series in graphic novel format. We recommend the series to fans of LUM and RANMA and to people who like this style of humor, but the mini-series is a must read so that one may understand the current story.

Normand Bilodeau

VIDEO REVIEWS

HiHo!HiHo! This time in VR, we already have something special! And it's not dwarves. There are of course the usual reviews, but on top we have a little contest for you. Read on!

3 X 3 EYES

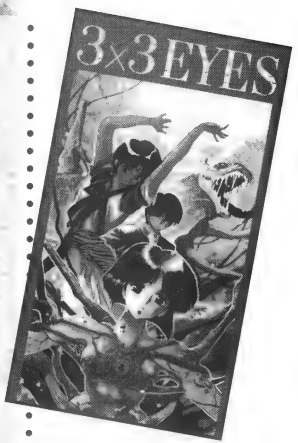
Episode 2: "...who needs Enemies"

As Yakumo and Pai have no lead on the whereabouts of the NINGEN (an artifact with the power to change Pai into a human), Yakumo decides to put the search on hold and starts back for Japan in hope of getting his old life back. Sanjian, Pai's alternate personality, reminds him of his promise to help Pai become human. Enters a Demon who seeks immortality by possessing Pai's soul. The battle of might begins again. Yakumo realizes that even his friends consider him different and changed: they fear him, except Natsuko, who even implores Pai to release Yakumo. The war of decisions continues. Episode two is very much a reinforcement of the two main characters' personalities, as well as a deepening of Yakumo's debt to Pai/Sanjian.

For those who haven't seen the first installment in this four-part series, never fear! The introduction of episode two is an excellent summary of the events that transpired in part one. The music supports the action very well, and we must congratulate STREAMLINE PICTURES for an excellent job on the dubbing. The only negative note we found was the special effects used on top of the demon's voice: at times, it made his lines totally incomprehensible. That apart, 3 x 3 EYES is an excellent horror story with a human twist, definitely worth viewing. By the way, the manga version is also available in English.

3 x 3 Eyes, ©1991 Yuzo Takada
Kodansha-Plex-Star Child
English version by and available through STREAMLINE PICTURES
P.O. Box 691418, West Hollywood, CA, 90069 USA

Stéphane Pierre



NADIA AND THE SECRET OF BLUE WATER

Episode 6: "Gargoyle's Fortress"

While Jean and Nadia are trying to find ways to escape from the island, King and Mary are captured by Gargoyle's troops. Jean and Nadia must now penetrate the enemy base to rescue them.

In their attempt, they discover Grandis and her two brilliant accomplices slaving in the mines, plotting their own escape. Unfortunately for Grandis and her boys, the attempt fails, but Jean and Nadia seize the occasion: the ruckus caused by the attempt enables them to penetrate deeper and deeper in the fortress. There we witness the arrival of Gargoyle himself and are introduced to his MASTER PLAN! Our two young heroes are eventually discovered and must flee to avoid capture.

This episode retains the charm of the previous ones, as we see Jean and Nadia evolve as characters: Nadia becoming more and more the mother figure for Little Mary, and Jean increasingly growing into an adult. While hinting at Gargoyle's master plan, we are not given enough to keep our curiosity going: we only learn that it has a strange connection to Blue Water. Fortunately (or unfortunately), the interest of the episode revolves more around the rescue. To have a greater idea of the threat posed by Gargoyle would greatly enhanced the suspense. Despite this, Nadia's fans will find all the elements that make this series so appealing. For those who have not yet seen an episode of Nadia, it is an adventure series that appeals to everyone (something that does not come often!). Just go and check Episode 1.

Nadia and The Secret of Blue Water
by GAINAX
©1989 NHK-SOGOVISION-TOHO
English version by and available through
STREAMLINE PICTURES
P.O. Box 691418, West Hollywood, CA, 90069 USA

Stéphane Pierre

OTAKU NO VIDEO

Strangely enough this video has turned out to be one of our favorites. It labels itself a mockumentary: in this, Otaku No Video lives up to its name. This is the fictionalized history of GAINAX, one of Japan's animation studios. You have it all in two OVAs packed in a single release. Yet it is also the story of the people that "made" the company.

Like us, the main characters are "Otaku" or fans who have made this passion their lives. And in these characters, one will always recognize a part of his own self. We share(d) the same activities: the long nights spent watching videos or gaming, the arguments and discussions on your favorite heroes or machines! And best of all, the comradeship between friends who share a common interest. Throughout the animation, mock interviews with ex- or long time Otaku are shown. And in the midst of it all, you might ask yourself "Am I that involved? Is it that bad?". Let us answer: No, probably not as bad, but the extremes shown are laughable as well as sobering. Too much of a good thing...

The animation is fantastic and the subtitling work very well done. We must admit that some parts are crowded, mostly during the Otaku poll statistics. Still better, this animation is a good time. And it's not just about animation fans, it's also about any type of fans. There is a mountain of "inside jokes" throughout the animation (we recommend reading the liner notes that accompany the video box —nice job ANIMEIGO! PL), and justice must be done to the GAINAX people for this fantastic little project. You don't need to know much about animation, just like it. For Otaku, "a whole lotta shakin' goin' on"! From the people of PA still rolling on the floor laughing (You can stand up now Pierre! CJP), this is an animation must! Otaking forever!

Otaku No Video
©1991, by GAINAX
Licensed by Youmex
English Subtitled version by and available through
ANIMEIGO
P.O. Box 989, Wilmington, NC. 28402-0989 USA

Stéphane Pierre... and staff!

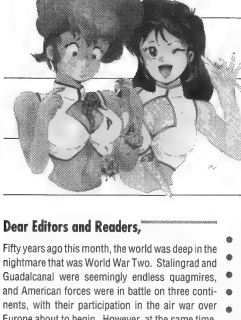
In fact, OTAKU NO VIDEO is so much of a must that PA will prove it to you readers. In collaboration with ANIMEIGO, PA (MECHA PRESS too!) is having its first contest in a long while. Up for grabs, a **free** copy of **OTAKU NO VIDEO**. Get your pen and pencils out, here is what you have to do:

In a drawing or a five-hundred word (or less) text, show/tell us
WHAT IS THE ULTIMATE OTAKU?
The text can be anything (short story, definition, etc.) your heart desires. You can be funny, witty, critical, whatever, BUT it must be LEGIBLE! Drawings/art entries can be submitted in any medium (color, B&W, montage, collage, etc.), but not larger than 8.5" x 14". The three (3) winning entries will each receive a copy of OTAKU NO VIDEO and see their entries printed in PA. Good Luck and Have Fun!

All entries for the contest must be sent to:

OTAKU!!!
c/o IANUS PUBLICATIONS
2360 de LaSalle Ave, Studio 211
Montreal, QC
H1V 2L1 CANADA

Entries must be postmarked by August 21st 1993.
Winners will be announced in issue 25 (September'93).
Staff, employees and their relatives of ANIMEIGO and IANUS PUBLICATIONS may not participate in this contest.



VOICE OF THE FREEDOM FIGHTER

Dear Editors and Readers,

Fifty years ago this month, the world was deep in the nightmare that was World War Two. Stalingrad and Guadalcanal were seemingly endless quagmires, and American forces were in battle on three continents, with their participation in the air war over Europe about to begin. However, at the same time, a new dream that would become a nightmare was sparked. Enrico Fermi succeeded in his experiments with atomic power. In less than three years, every man, woman, and child on Earth would learn about the power inside the fiber of matter — for good and ill.

In the era since the first atomic pile and the atomic bomb, mankind and his culture have changed dramatically. As I write this, I could only guess what my grandparents, living fifty years ago, could have thought of one of their progeny composing a letter like I do now. Atomic power from over twenty miles away is allowing me to create words by typing with an electrical keyboard through complex circuitry to brighten a colorful, glowing screen before me. I expect that not even my mother's father, who worked with the cutting edge of telecommunications technology back then, would have thought of it. The changes have been nothing short of revolutionary.

The war that caused all this change left scars everywhere. No more so than in Japan, which suffered massive losses both on the battlefield and at home. I saw "GRAVE OF THE FIREFILES" not very long ago, and after seeing the film I was more moved emotionally than I have ever been by a movie. Although my ideas about the war had changed quite a bit since my youth, this work drove it home. What happened to Britain during the Blitz was nothing compared to what the United States Army Air Forces did to Japan in the last year of World War Two. As ghastly as the Nazi Holocaust was, the indiscriminate bombings were equally appalling.

I bring this up because I never knew the way the survivors in Japan lived, during and after the crisis. I can only hear the story and imagine. And count my blessings — that I never had to fight in a war. That I never had to fear for anybody's safety, not even my own family's. That I never had to see my home and life crumble into dust in front of me. These people had. They endured a racial war against a powerful industrial power that had the ability to wipe them out. They kept their culture and society alive where others would have extinguished. The people who buy and read PROTOCULTURE ADDICTS should admire that.

When the Coalition forces gathered in Saudi Arabia before Desert Storm, I wrote a paper, now relegated to my personal archives, comparing the situation to AREA 88 and airing my hopes for a quick end to the crisis. I won't include the paper, but I want to say the same thing now I said then: as much as we trivialize war and violence in fiction, we must never forget the real consequences of violence in the lives of everybody. Although I am a big fan of the weapons technology in anime, I never want to see it created for real. This world has enough suffering and pain and to have it compounded by such machines of destruction would make it unbereable.

Having said that, I want to write articles for MECHA PRESS. What are your guidelines and submissions?... I've been pleasantly surprised by the technical leaps and bounds IANUS has made since I started reading PROTOCULTURE ADDICTS. Keep up the good work!

Sincerely,

Stephen Bierce
Spring Hill, FL

Thanks for having shared you thoughts on war with us. It is deeply appreciated. That's this kind of reflexion that makes life richer. We are welcoming all kinds of submissions (just write us to receive the guidelines). If it is good, we will print it. We are looking for articles between 800 and 1500 words, mostly synopses or in-depth articles.

Of course, sexist, racist and other degrading articles will simply be refused. Sadly, we can't pay for contributions for now. Contributors will receive a free copy of the magazine, proper credits, and our eternal gratitude. We simply don't have any budget for that now, but it will change in a couple of issues. We are planning to pay at least 1¢ per word. I hope this will not stop you from contributing.

Dear PROTOCULTURE ADDICTS,

We at the Anime HQ Exchange Club, have noticed an important tie-in on the subtitled version of BUBBLE GUM CRISIS #1. In checking the newspaper's picture (the first newspaper that is pulled out from the computer), the robed character (don't know her name at this time) from ICZER-ONE appears. The second tie-in appears where a different newspaper (the one from Mackie) is put on the counter in Sylia's store, the Silky Doll. The seeable picture on that one is none other than that of Noriko from GUNBUSTER (she did appear on Earth in the year 2032). Also, when the two video billboards appear, Panthro from the THUNDER CATS makes a guest appearance (right-hand side of the screen).

We will update you on any future tie-ins we find.
Sincerely,

Kevin Flaherty & Kelly Howell
ANIME HQ EXCHANGE CLUB
Mantor Hall, Room 364
1203 west 26th, Kearney, NE
68849-4320 USA

Dear PA,

A few points to get across:

1) I like the explanation in #19 as to why #17 and 18 were late. You said they were to be released by November. It is now January and as part of my subscription #17 and #18 haven't arrived. Issue 18

was the last of my subscription and I am wondering if I will get them.

2) Speaking of late issues: What happened to the third ANIME SHOWER SPECIAL? This DOES NOT bother me at all. As I DON'T read the "men's" magazines I know how to keep control of myself. If anyone has complaints send them to the studios themselves since they are the ones making them in the first place.

3) In the past letter columns I've read about people praising MECHA-PRESS #1. I ordered it through my comic distributor and it ended up being cancelled on me. I am also still waiting for my MP SPECIAL #1: Spaceship.

4) I agree: DO NOT buy pirated videos. You will get a poor quality tape or disc.

5) With HDTV soon to come, will it play our current tapes and discs or will we have to pay for new copies on the new format?

6) I like the "Anime Gossip" column.

7) With the reviews and in-depth articles, I can choose the ones that pique my interest or ignore the ones that don't.

8) All in all you are doing a fine job on your magazine. Keep up the good work and I hope you solve your problems so we can continue to receive your fine magazine.

Ron Hadlund
Council Bluffs, IA

Some answers back: 1) #17 & 18 were indeed sollicited for November and even if they were already half finished in September, lots of production problems caused more delays: we had to train new staff for the layout, Streamline made us do several corrections on their feature, etc. Better later than never. 2) The ANIME SHOWER #3 was released last November. You missed it, but we still have some copies in stock. 3) MPSS was cancelled. It seems that this kind of special issue does not have much success with the distributors. Don't worry though, most of its contents will be in MP #9. 4) The quality of the pirated copy does not matter. The fact that it is pirated does. 5) It will be a while before we see commercialization of HDTV, but when it will happen we will have to make new copies of our VHS. It is most likely that it won't be compatible with anything. 6) Lots of people don't. That's why it may disappear. 7) That's the point. 8) Thanks and don't worry: we are back stronger, better than ever and for good!

Dear PA:

I just finished reading issue 18 (I get my books very belatedly) and the questionnaire at the back intrigued me, especially question 3. The question posted was the level of studies you have completed. I took this question as judgemental. It seems as though you think all your readers are not very young. You're wrong.

I'm 13 years old and very proud to say I am an anime fan at large. Although the anime and manga interest in my community is not very large, I still enjoy reading, watching and purchasing Japanimation products. But enough of that. Here's just a few comments I'd like to get of my chest:

Do not overlook ZILLION. Okay, so it is a bit corny, but the animation is good.

ROBOTECH is over! Done! Kaput! Why can't we put this series behind us and move on?

Does anyone out there get sick of subtitles? Don't get me wrong. BUBBLEGUM CRISIS was good, but I had to watch "Scoop Chase" twice to take it all in. This has turned me off AnimEigo. Maybe a dubbed URUSEI YATSURA? Only time will tell.

Where are those promised AKIRA products? How about AKIRA 2? Epic is doing a superb job on the comic.

How revolting is that of FIST OF THE NORTH STAR. It's absolute crap. It left me wondering "why the hell didn't the plot change?"

Oh, well, I guess I'm just crabby when it comes to ninjas. My personal video and movie faves are NAUSICAÄ, AKIRA, ZILLION, LENSMAN, and GUNDAM. If any one wants to write to me to share their feelings on the anime world, I'm at 3840 Blundell Rd., Richmond, B.C., Canada, V7C 1G4.

Thanks PA, I love what you've done for the hobby. Best of luck in '93.

Most sincerely,
Scott McCord
Richmond, BC

P.S. I did a project at school on Japanimation. Your magazine is in my bibliography. I got a B+! Thanx.

Dear PA:

I want to commend you on the two quality issues of PA (#17 and 18) that I have recently received. I hate to state the obvious, but your magazine continue to get better. I enjoyed virtually every part of it, including the news, editorial section, reviews, excellent articles and especially the interview with John O'Donnell of Central Park Media Corporation. He is a "master" and I have nothing but praise for both his and Carl Macek's effort and dedication in promoting/marketing etc. Japanese animation in North America. I also do not understand the criticism of Macek's work(s). I am eternally grateful for his involvement with ROBOTECH. However, I just wanted to say that while I understand the purpose and goal of (and absolute need for) more dubbed titles, I am a little worried. Anime SHOULD become more "mainstream" and its worth recognized. I also do not want the anime "industry" to collapse, but rather expend further, reach more people and hopefully everyone involved is successful. I also enjoy many of the dubbed videos that I have seen. CAGLIOSTRO CASTLE was outstanding and few others that are good or excellent (in my opinion) are TWILIGHT OF THE COCKROACHES, NADIA, and ORGUSS. I just do not think it would be great if subtitling is abandoned completely, especially by a company like US Manga Corps. If every new release is eventually dubbed because that is preferable, fine, but I would hope that I would still have the option or opportunity to obtain a subtitled version, especially with anime like GALL FORCE and anything dealing with URUSEI YATSURA. I would just lose TOO much. Thank you for letting me get my two cents in and allowing me to overreact. I have been interested (somewhat intensely) in anime for a little over two years, so I am a relatively new fan. Your magazine is one of my major guides into something that I invest a lot in and am committed to.

Eric S. Frauvenfeld
Pittsburgh, PA

PS: You should raise your subscription price by at least 33%. I feel a little guilty for giving so little.

Exactly what I thought. Quality is costly, and we don't have a choice. Subscribers have been lucky in the past. Now they will pay their issues almost the same as in stores, but they are guaranteed to receive their copy. See our ad on page 43.

CJP

THE ANIME EXPLOSION CONTINUES

SUMMER RELEASES 1993

AD POLICE FILES

VHS Tape release 8/15/93. Cat#AT093-0 05. SRP $34.95.Time approx 40 mins.

Explore the dark side of MegaTokyo in the first installment of the *AD POLICE FILES*. The Knight Sabers have yet to appear on the scene, and society is only just beginning to comprehend the promise and peril of GENOM's Boomer android technology. In **FILE 1: PHANTOM WOMAN**, Rookie AD Police officer Leon McNichol and his partner Gaena investigate a series of Boomer rampages, and soon discover that they are the work of a defective Boomer who is illegally reactivating scrapped Boomers -- one of whom carries within her the memory of the man who destroyed her; Leon McNichol!

The *AD POLICE FILES* contain violence, nudity and adult situations; viewer discretion is advised.

KIMAGURE ORANGE ROAD LD#2 (OVAS 5-8)

Laserdisc release 8/25/93. Cat#AD093-002. SRP $64.95. Time approx 100 mins.

Our collector's LD release of *KIMAGURE ORANGE ROAD* continues this month wit the second OVA LD. which includes **SPRING IS FOR IDOLS, BIRTH OF A STAR, AN UNEXPECTED SITUATION,** and **MESSAGE IN ROUGE.**

As with all our LD releases, *KOR LD #2* has been resubtitled especially for LD, and comes complete with lots of chapter marks, extra goodies on the disc, and extensive liner notes.

Also available on VHS tape. Cat # AT092-008, AT092-009. $39.95 each.

URUSEI YATSURA TV VOL. 9 (EPISODES 31-34)

VHS Tape release 8/15/93. Cat#AT092-109. SRP $39.95. Time approx 100 mins.

Urusei Yatsura fever continues with our 9th compilation of TV episode madness, containing the usual four installments of insanity. Ataru wreaks his revenge when Ten's horn falls out, rendering him powerless, while Ran, who finds the missing horn, is up to something rotten; a trip to the library results in grave danger to the world of books; Lum decides to attend school, and this combined with a new teacher spells disaster; and a lonely goblin vacates his home at the bottom of a deep pool and causes chaos.

Altogether, ***Urusei Yatsura*** consists of 196 half-hour TV Series episodes, 11 OVAs (Original Video Animations --short animated films released direct to video), and 6 animated Motion Pictures. Targeted at a young adult (14-30) audience, ***Urusei Yatsura*** (loosely translated:" *Those Obnoxious Aliens*") is the classic Japanese animated comedy. Created by one of Japan's most popular comic-book artists, **Takahashi Rumiko**, ***Urusei Yatsura*** is a slapstick risque comedy where anything can happen--and does!

Warning: due to high comedy content, the Comedian General strongly suggests that you do not eat or drink while watching Urusei Yatsura.

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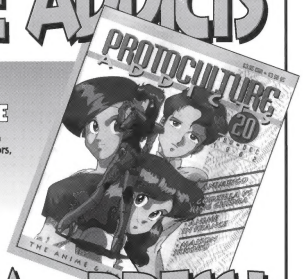

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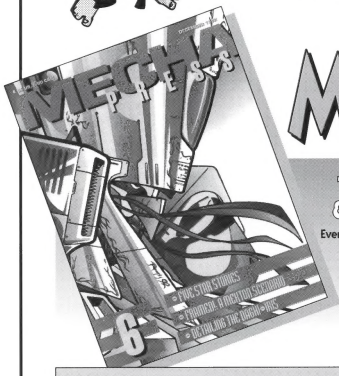

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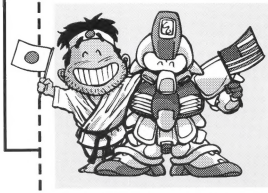

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